Record of Christian Work

East Northfield, Massachusetts.

VOL. 40. DECEMBER, 1921. NO. 12.

Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.—*Luke 2.15.*

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY.

A spacious valley indicates to the traveler coming from Jerusalem the close approach to Bethlehem, says a Bulletin of the National Geographic Society. It is in this valley that the shepherds are believed to have rested on that first Christmas morning when they received the tidings of Christ's birth. Across the valley, near the crest of a limestone ridge, rise the walls and buildings of Bethlehem, dominated by the gray-white Church of the Nativity and the three convents, Roman, Greek and Armenian,—parts of them like medieval fortresses,—that are connected with the church. The town is on sloping ground, and seems, from the valley, to rise in a series of sharply defined terraces. This appearance is heightened by the careful agricultural terracing of the hillsides below and about the town, the areas thus reclaimed being planted to olives and grapes. On the more level spaces in the neighborhood of the town vegetables and grain are planted. About the surroundings of the village is much to indicate that here dwells a people more than ordinarily industrious, and that the old Hebrew name of the place, Beit lahm, meaning "house of bread," was not ill chosen.

Persons who have visited other villages of Palestine are impressed by the greater industry and alertness of the people of Bethlehem. Many have ascribed this to the fact that it is a community composed almost exclusively of Christians, who, unhampered by belief in fatalism as are their Moslem neighbors, naturally seek to better their conditions. Undoubtedly Bethlehem's residents owe some of their industry to their creed, but they owe something also to the more virile blood of the West which has flowed in their veins since the establishment of a flourishing crusader colony in the village in the Middle Ages. Nearly all writers who have traveled in Palestine point out that this admixture of blood is evident in the possession by the people of Bethlehem of fairer skin and features more nearly of an Arian cast than are to be found elsewhere in the country.

Built upon a hillside, Bethlehem has always had good drainage, and has been relatively clean as Eastern towns go. But four years of war under Turkish rule left it abominably filthy. Western ideals of sanitation during the British occupation set the townsmen to work on a modified "city beautiful" campaign, and thanks to incineration and the use of water and whitewash the buildings of the City of David are gleaming white, while under foot the community is cleaner than at any other time perhaps in its thousands of years of existence.

And socially and industrially Bethlehem is brighter. The Turk is gone. There is again work for the artisans. Tourists, and now and then a pilgrim or two, are straggling in, and there is once more a sale for sacred mementos.

After the passage of nineteen centuries, during many of which Bethlehem was lost to history, at times perhaps even to contact with the followers of Jesus, it is inevitable that the exact spot which was his birthplace should be in some doubt. Many a painting of the Holy Family pictures stables such as Palestine has never known. When it is explained that within the great room of the stone houses of present-day villagers—especially in those villages whose old traditions seem unspoiled by modern

influences,—are both family living quarters and stable space for animals, a truer picture of the manger of Bethlehem can perhaps be constructed. The further explanation that some of the village houses are built over caves or grottoes opens up additional possibilities in interpreting the language of accounts of the nativity.

For at least fifteen centuries, and perhaps even since the earliest days of the growth of Christianity, the very grotto in which is reputed to have taken place the most significant of the world's billions of births has been preserved as a holy place. Over this revered spot, in the year 330, Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, first of the Christian emperors of Rome, caused to be erected the Church of the Nativity. The Church of the Nativity which stands in Bethlehem today is believed to be that same church of the Empress Helena, repaired from time to time, but with its form and much of its substance unchanged.

The entire church stands as a monument to the birthplace of Jesus, but below its main floor, in a cavern hollowed from the living rock, is the Grotto of the Nativity. This cave is believed to be the stable of St. Luke's account of the birth. Its limestone walls and floor have been encased in marble sent from Italy, and much of the walls in turn are covered with heavy embroidered hangings. The smoke that for centuries has risen from lamps and candles has blackened the roof. On one side of the stairway leading from the church above is a recess in which is a marble manger. This is the revered Chapel of the Manger. But it is on the other side that is to be found the objective of all pilgrims: the relatively small, low Niche of the Nativity, surmounted by an altar.

The costliest of hangings cover the walls of the recess. Sixteen lamps of gold, the gifts of kings and emperors, hang from its roof. Their flames never die, but carefully tended, some by each of the three groups of priests, burn on through the years and centuries. The floor of the niche is of marble, and in its center is set a silver star,—emblem of the Star of the East. In a semicircle about the silver points are eight words. They form but a brief and simple sentence, yet a sentence more meaningful perhaps than any other graven text in all the world: "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est,"—Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.

Our worship and reverence should all be for Christ, not for his birthplace or surroundings. Then our next step will be to realize his presence in our own daily life now, rather than far away in the past in Palestine.

Our neighborhood may be as bare and poor as Bethlehem, as despised as Nazareth, but what matter if we find him there?

AMERICAN NOTES.

India is to be the subject of the four foreign mission graded study books for 1922-23.

The National Tuberculosis Association is promoting its 14th annual **Christmas Seal Sale** to raise funds. It states that there are a million active cases of tuberculosis in this country, and over 130,000 deaths yearly.

A Syrian bought from the Chicago depository of the American Bible Society 200 Syriac Bibles at $13.50 each to take back with him to his native land. The San Francisco depository reported that three Jews bought a whole Bible costing $17.50.

The 48th annual meeting of the **National Woman's Christian Temperance Union** at San Francisco called for a million members for its 1922 campaign, a jubilee fund of a million dollars, the education of women voters, the preaching, teaching and practising of total abstinence, and reaching out a welcome hand to foreign-speaking sisters.

Mr. William Jennings Bryan delivered the James Sprunt Lectures at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., last October.

The general subject of the series was "In His Image," and the subjects of the several lectures were: (1) "In the Beginning God"; (2) "It is Written"; (3) "What Think Ye of Christ?" (4) "The Origin of Man"; (5) "Brother or Brute"; (6) "The Larger Life"; (7) "The Price of a Soul"; (8) "But Where Are the Nine?"

An act providing for the **reading of the Bible in the schools of Alabama** was

passed in 1919, and "requires to have once every school day readings from the Holy Bible. Teachers in their monthly reports shall show on same that they have complied with this Act. . . . . Schools in the State of Alabama shall not be allowed to draw public funds unless the provisions of this Act are complied with."

Eight of the larger cities of the country have witnessed the unusual spectacle of the evangelistic leaders of many denominations on the same platform uniting in presenting a program of **federated evangelism for the whole community.** The present campaign was organized by the Commission on Evangelism of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America under the guidance of Rev. Charles L. Goodell, the executive secretary.

These conferences brought together leading ministers, laymen and Sunday school workers of the different denominations in each of the cities visited. The subjects discussed included pastoral and personal evangelism, vocational evangelism, successful methods of evangelism, rural and city work, and evangelism in the Sunday school.

A peculiar proposition was recently presented to the Board of Estimate in New York City. A real estate operator, according to reports in the daily papers, suggested at a meeting of the Board that all **churches on Fifth Avenue,** with the possible exception of St. Patrick's Cathedral, should be relegated to side streets on less valuable property.

"This may seem to be a revolutionary doctrine," said Mr. Simon in addressing the Board, "but I am free to say it. Houses of worship like the Calvary Baptist Church and others from which the city gets no taxes should not be allowed to occupy prominent thoroughfares."

Mr. Simon suggested that the Calvary Baptist Church property on West Fifty-seventh Street could be sold for $1,000,000, and an edifice of equal beauty, where communicants could do their worshiping, be erected on a less valuable site. The city, he said, would thus have the benefit in taxes of the sold property.

Here Mayor Hylan abruptly interrupted. "I want you to understand that the dollar is not everything in this city," said he. "There are beautiful things, sacred things, that mean more to the hearts of the people than mere money-making."

The Woman's Department of the Chicago Federation of Churches has sheltered an average of 500 women in its House of Refuge each of the three years of its history. Through coöperation with denominational institutions and philanthropic and civic agencies the varied needs of all who applied were met.

The women came from nearly every state in the union, and from many foreign countries, and belonged to all denominations. They represented every phase of society, from the wayward girl fleeing disgrace to the society lady entangled and compromised in her search for pleasure. Wise Christian counsel, legal protection, hospital care, and close motherly guardianship protect and save all alike.

The legislative committee of the same organization, led by its chairman, a trained woman lawyer, investigated a notorious case of police misconduct which ended in the death of a young girl. Quietly, yet thoroughly, step by step did these devoted women follow the case from court to court through delay after delay up to the final conviction of the guilty parties. When the wearisome task was over the prosecuting attorney told them that their continual presence in court, representing the church women of Chicago, had been a moral support, the strength of which they could never estimate.

An official statement issued by the War Department contains a fine acknowledgment of the significance of the **Sabbath in the life of the nation.** The document has to do with "Conduct of Troops Changing Station by Marching," and is known officially as Circular 229. Among the instructions "published for the guidance of all concerned" is the following:

"The sentiment of the nation concerning Sabbath observance should be respected, and no marches, except in cases of necessity, be made on Sunday. Opportunity should be provided for religious services, conducted by the chaplain or through community cooperation, and dignified publicity of such services should be made."

In connection with this order of the pres-

ent day it is interesting to recall an order issued by George Washington at Valley Forge, May 2, 1778, a copy of which the Chief of Chaplains, Colonel John T. Axton, has circulated:

"The Commander-in-Chief directs that divine service be performed every Sunday at eleven o'clock in each brigade which has chaplains. Those brigades which have none will attend the places of worship nearest to them. It is expected that officers of all ranks will by their attendance set an example to their men. While we are duly performing the duty of good soldiers we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the highest duties of religion. To the distinguishing characteristics of a patriot it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished characteristic of a Christian."

"Dullest Summer in Fifteen Years" in New York Police Courts.

Even though only partly enforced, prohibition has caused a remarkable slump in New York police court cases since Governor Miller signed the Mullen-Gage law. New York City has been admittedly the wettest city in the United States, and until this year summer was the busiest time of the year for the police courts. Almost every Saturday and Sunday nights in the picnic parks where a $1.00 entrance fee entitled the guest to all the beer wished without additional cost, stabbing and shooting affrays were frequent, together with accidents of all kinds. The police courts were always full on Monday mornings, and the Sunday and Monday papers full of headlines featuring both crimes and accidents.

Although drinking is not altogether a thing of the past, crimes due to it have dropped to almost zero, and the police court on Monday is easy for the magistrate and blue for the police court reporter.

Exporting the American Playground.

The disbursement of a $16,000 gift made by C. M. Goethe of Sacramento toward the foreign missions phase of "Exporting the American Playground" has been taken over by the Sacramento Church Federation, which has therefore definitely entered, through coöperating missionaries, upon an educational program to make available for all humanity the crystallized recreational experience of America.

America's contribution to world recreational thought is twofold. First is the playground-under-direction, the evolution of which is peculiarly American. The second is the public school community center, developed for both day and night use by adults as well as by children. Just as America contributes these two things, so other nations have added their unique solutions of various recreation problems. Denmark's contribution, for example, is the conduct of field excursions to teach the enjoyment of the music of wild birds to the children of blind schools.

In the missionary unit of a World Recreation Survey some 4000 mission centers, extending from Chile to Burma, from the Congo to Mexico, from Armenia to China, are being interested. The reactions of these overseas groups of Americans indicate that in some world areas, as in China, economic pressure practically crushes out all play from the lives of even quite small children. As a result of this educational campaign, in one South American republic there is being opened at a school conducted under missionary auspices the first playground in a nation numbering millions of children among its population. It is believed that this leaven will affect the whole mass.

Another result of the Sacramento Church Federation's educational work has been a bequest of $100,000 for further expansion of this program, and for the purpose of opening demonstration playgrounds at the capitals of various foreign countries. The same methods are to be employed in the conduct of these demonstration playgrounds as were originally employed by the Playground Association of America in the early stages of the playground movement in this country.

CURRENT THOUGHT.

There have been two businesses in history that deliberately killed their customers: one was the saloon, the other the brothel.—"Dearborn Independent."

In a general intelligence test in a school one of the questions was, "What is the longest day in the year?"

One child answered: "Sunday."

Mount Hermon School boys at play.

One has suggested that Hebrew Christians ought to refuse to be called "converted Jews" for the reason that faith in Christ is the fulfilment, not the abandonment, of the religion of Israel.

Vital doctrine. I like "vital" better than "fundamental." "Vital" speaks of life because of the great gift to the world through the Saviour Christ,—his life. I do not object to "fundamental," but "vital" is a word I cherish. It is a great New Testament word.—R. C. Gillie.

Needless to say, says the Bishop of Exeter, **the result of divorce** is generally disappointing. The same causes that mar the first marriage tend to make the second unhappy. The hysterical nervous mind that has lost its self-control will quarrel a second time as easily as at first. If the facilities for divorce were largely diminished, I have no doubt marriages would be generally happier.

What is meant by **original sin** is that there is more in humanity to be accounted for than the particular transgressions you or I may be guilty of. It asserts not only that particular men and women have done wrong and reaped the penalty of wrong-doing, but that back behind all these particular sins and sinners somehow humanity, human nature as a whole, has gone wrong.—Bishop Gore.

May we say, "Salvation by character"? No. Shall it be, "Salvation from character"? No. "Salvation without character"? Many times, no! "Salvation into character"? Yes, or perhaps better, **salvation from character to character.**

Instantaneous conversion is possible, instantaneous attainment of character is not possible. The infant comes into the world without character; he must grow it. The babe in Christ must also win his character.—Edward B. Pollard.

Major Walter Collins of the Columbus (Ohio) Volunteers of America thinks that if a number of the boys and girls who imagine that they are already men and women could now and then be given a real good licking a great number of the **minor crimes** would never be committed.

To the greater extent he blames these cases on the lack of parental care. In this respect he continues:

"To my mind there is no doubt that the general run of parents today are more or less indifferent to the upbringing of their children. I notice on all sides less and less of the old-time family life, which went so far to mold the character of the children. The mother, I think, is more to blame than the father."

Speaking of his most recent triumph, the **Fountain of Time in Chicago,** Lorado Taft said:

A vagrant line or two of Austin Dobson's once made a great impression upon me. Says the poet,

> Time goes, you say? Ah, no!
> Alas, time stays; we go!

The words brought before me a picture which speedily transformed fancy into a colossal work of sculpture. I saw the mighty, crag-like figure of Time, mantled like one of Sargent's prophets, leaning upon his staff, his chin upon his hands, and watching with cynical, inscrutable gaze the endless march of humanity. A majestic relief of marble I saw it, swinging in a wide circle around the form of the lone sentinel, and made up of the shapes of hurrying men and women and children in endless procession, ever impelled by the winds of destiny in the inexorable lock-step of the ages. Theirs the "fate-formed movement" which has not ceased since time began. But in that crowded concourse how few detach themselves from the grayness of the dusty caravan, how few there are who even lift their heads! Here an overtaxed body falls,—and a place is vacant for a moment. There a strong man turns to the silent, shrouded reviewer, and with lifted arms utters the cry of the old-time gladiators: "Hail, Cæsar, we who go to our death salute thee!" and presses on.

WORLDWIDE JOTTINGS.

The British Colonial Office has officially recognized the elective **National Council of Palestine** (Vaad Haleumi) as representative of the Jewish population.

Thomas Hogben, founder of the **One-by-one Working Band,** died during the past year, but the work of the Band reports advance, particularly in other lands than England.

The **Tokyo Chamber of Commerce** has adopted a resolution favoring the closing of all shops on Sunday as part of a program for improving the hours of labor throughout the week.

At a general conference in Prague of the dissenters from the Roman Catholic Church in Czecho-Slovakia union with the Serbian Orthodox Church was announced. This gives the **movement away from Rome** greater prestige and stability.

The **"Dictionary of National Biography"** tells of the great men of England. Of these famous characters 350 were sons of physicians, 510 were sons of lawyers, and 1270 were sons of ministers. The manse gave fifty per cent more great men than the two other learned professions put together.

There are forty départements in France where Protestantism is practically unknown. But that **French Protestantism** should be weighed, not counted, seems substantiated by the choice of André Weiss, chairman of the French Protestant committee, as judge on the International Court of the League of Nations.

The president-elect of Chile has declared himself thoroughly in favor of complete religious liberty and the separation of church and state. He has publicly thanked the Protestants of the country for their support at the elections, and accepted from the Ministers' Association of Santiago the gift of a handsomely bound Bible. He has taken an open stand against liquor, and telegraphed to towns he visited that he would prefer that the committee of arrangements omit all liquors in any celebrations that might be prepared. He has also begun the destruction of his own vineyard.

In **Esthonia** the schools founded by the Y. M. C. A. for Russian refugees are exerting a wide and growing influence. Real educational institutions, adapted to the needs of varying communities, have been organized, and are instilling habits of order and diligence in the children. The teaching of the Bible in the schools, thanks to the gift by the Y of a New Testament to each scholar and teacher, is based on the living Word instead of a lifeless catechism, and many of the teacher-priests are advocating the adoption of the religious teaching given by the Association as the fundamentals of the revivified Russian church. This is significant moulding work in the life of the new nation.

A Neapolitan cobbler recently said to one of the colporters of the British and Foreign Bible Society:

"Sir, I want to ask a favor of you. I know that you are one of the Lord's workers, and I see that your boots need repair. I want to have the honor of mending them."

"If it will please you, do it by all means," replied the colporter; "but you must let me pay you, for you have to live."

"I have read," replied the cobbler, "what

our Lord said about giving a cup of cold water to one of his little ones in the name of a disciple." So he mended the colporter's boots, and then said:

"Dear brother, if I could I would make you a new pair, but as that cannot be, whenever your boots need repair,—the boots that you wear out in selling the Gospels,—come to me, and so I shall seem to have a share in this holy mission."

A Bible was recently presented to the **King of Spain** bearing this inscription:

"The Baptist Young Men's Christian Association of Havana, as a lasting remembrance of the delightful visit of the beloved Spanish Alfonso XIII to the hospitable shores of Cuba, dedicates to that admired monarch this Bible, which is the most eloquent symbol of the love and brotherhood which will always exist between that great nation and this beautiful pearl of the Caribbean. Read it, Your Majesty, and you will be wise; obey it, Your Majesty, and you will be holy; believe it, Your Majesty, and you will be saved.

"We are sending to you this token of our high esteem and the true fellowship which unites us to all Spanish peoples, by the courtesy of your own Vice-Admiral Cornejo."

The magnitude of the work of the **London Red Triangle Hospitality League** is hinted at by some of the figures of the last year. Sixty-eight thousand nine hundred and twenty-six men were met and dealt with by street patrols. Three hundred seventy-four thousand four hundred and fourteen were given a homely welcome in Y. M. C. A. Social Rooms. Twenty-eight thousand six hundred and fifty-five were guided to suitable lodgings; they hailed in one month from France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Denmark, India, Egypt, the Argentine, Burma, Somaliland, China, Australia, Canada, S. Africa, America, Scotland, Ireland. Twelve thousand and seventy-six men in destitution were helped with free meals and lodgings. Seven thousand four hundred and ninety young men emigrants received some form of escort or guidance. Over 60,000 men on the brink of possible vice were appealed to, and over 9300 women. Over 8300 cases of intoxication were dealt with.

These figures serve to remind one how many young lives are just drifting about, more or less homeless, friendless, guideless.

Writing of the need of **Bible distribution and active evangelization in Greece,** Rev. J. Riggs Brewster of the American Mission at Salonica says:

"Not more than ten miles down the plain to the south from where I am writing, the first European convert, Lydia, heard the Good News from the lips of Paul, and was baptized at Philippi. A few remnants of old walls, a theater, the ruins of a palace and the acropolis walls, are all that remain of 'the chief city' of that part of Macedonia. But the words of the apostle to the nations to the Philippian jailer, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' have survived the earthquake, and will be true to the end of time. The river 'where prayer was wont to be made' is still flowing, a mere brook, along its winding course in the marshes, but the 'women which resorted thither' have gone on to worship beside the pure river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb. The people of the vicinity of Paul's journeyings know little of the wonderful letter the great missionary wrote to their forefathers from the Roman prison. Why should these 'wonderful words of life' be longer kept from their knowledge? Supposing that the great apostle had written such words to the 'church in Chicago' or 'to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are in Boston,' would we not be proud to claim them as our own if residents of one of those great cities? But here are letters to Philippians, Thessalonians, and Corinthians, of whose contents the present inhabitants know practically nothing, and the church seems to be indifferent as to whether they do or not."

"It is a joy and a privilege to tell of the mighty acts of our God during another year in connection with his work on Ashley Down, in order that others may talk of his power, and be led to praise his blessed and glorious name. All previous financial records of the work have been surpassed, the Lord, who knew that the expenditure would be heavier than ever, graciously supplying us with an income more than £7000 in excess of last year's, which was the highest up to that time. The total in-

come received during the year is £54,360 7s. 8½d., this large sum enabling us to meet all the expenses, and close the year with a balance of £6125 0s. 7d."

Thus begins the 82nd annual report of **George Müller's Orphanage at Bristol,** England.

This brings the amount received since Mr. Müller's death in 1898 to £785,623, and the total amount from the beginning of the work to £2,242,776,—all received in answer to prayer, without any appeal either personally or in print.

The total number of children cared for during the year was 1351.

It is to be remembered that in 1833 God laid it on Mr. Müller's heart to establish day schools on a Scriptural basis, also the circulation of Bibles and tracts, and to help forward the preaching of the gospel in other lands. The advance of education has cut down the need for schools to two in England and five in Italy. Funds for these objects are kept separately.

Any reader who is not familiar with this work of faith should write to Dr. Wm. M. Bergin, 78 Park Street, Bristol, England, for a copy of the detailed annual report, a booklet of 88 pages.

A Letter from Russia.

A recent letter of unusual interest from Russia relates the hardships, especially of evangelical Christians, experienced in different cities of Russia today. The letter, which is from Gabriel Cherednick, secretary of the Russian Union of Christian Workers, deals with the opposition met at the conference of Christian Workers held in Tver in May.

The convention had barely started when it was dispersed by the Bolshevik government, and I. S. Prohkanoff, president of the Union, with several other of the most prominent members, was thrown into prison and sentenced to hard labor for an indefinite period. The reason for opposition to the Union, according to the letter, is the demoralizing effect of the Union upon the Red army and their refusal to join the ranks.

"All the persecution that was inflicted upon the Russians under the Czar's régime is nothing as compared to the atrocities and conditions of the so-called labor and present-day government," the letter said. "In Petrograd alone 70 of our brethren were shot and thousands thrown into prison in one day.

"In connection with the great spiritual movement all over Russia and Siberia, and with the refusal of our brethren to join the Red army, the Soviet government has declared a war against all religions," the letter stated.

Pilgrim Preachers.

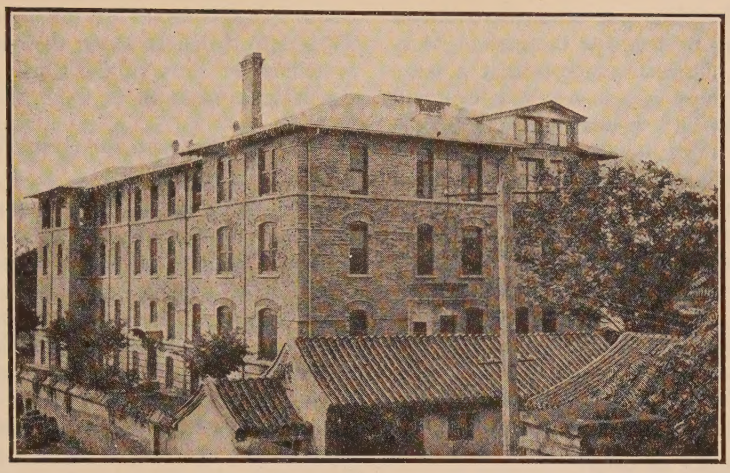
A group of men calling themselves the Pilgrim Preachers toured England the past summer. Their plan was to move forward on bicycles, with a motor truck to carry their baggage. From town to town they went, but were free to stop at villages en route, or wherever people were found to listen. Arrived at a town this is representative of their program:

"On entering the town the Pilgrims, accompanied by many Christian friends, marched through the principal streets playing half a dozen concertinas, singing as only Welshmen can sing, and marching with a spirit of joy and holy triumph beautiful to behold. What wonder that the town was captured by storm; the shopkeepers rushed to the door, and the people came out in crowds.

"The march terminus was the Market Place. Some thousands, more or less, and men mostly, followed. The Pilgrims here held forth the Word of Life with extraordinary power. This great crowd of men were held where they stood for an hour and a half as if glued to the earth. What definite Biblical testimony! What honoring of the Lord Jesus! What desperate earnestness to seek and to save the lost! What a happy, holy liberty in speech and song! Verily it was singing in the Holy Ghost, preaching in the Holy Ghost. What a daring courage and absolute fearlessness in standing up to the world and to the devil! I have seen nothing to compare with it in my thirty years of public ministry."

At night and when the weather was wet meetings were held indoors. Only a couple of days were spent at a place. Tracts were distributed by the way.

The campaign ended in London on October 20.



North China Union Medical College for Women, at Peking.

PLANS AND POSSIBILITIES.

Instead of charging money for **admission to church affairs,** ask every one to bring a gift suitable to send to missionaries, Indians, Negroes, or whomever the meeting is to help.

James R. Mellon of Pittsburgh is credited with plans to build **a combination church** at his summer home in the Pennsylvania mountains. All denominations in the neighborhood will use the same auditorium, but separate exclusive altars will be provided for the Episcopalians and the Romanists.

A dramatic presentation of Amos in one act and two scenes was a feature of a summer school described in the "Friend's Intelligencer." The principals of the cast were Amos the shepherd prophet, his young kinsman, Amaziah the priest, one of his servants, the sheik of Bethel, a farmer, and two women of Bethel. A score of others assisted as temple attendants, dancing girls, and other characters of a type in keeping with the decadent worship of the shrine at Bethel. The costumes, wine jugs and skins, and other stage properties were native Palestinian materials.

In a letter to the "Methodist Recorder," dealing with a certain class of church critic, Rev. T. L. B. Westerdale writes:

Every man among us should be **boldly uplifting the banner of the cross** in these times, and setting before everything else the spiritual ideals of Jesus as the only hope of saving the soul of humanity, sinking in the mud of materialism, even if humanity shows little inclination to be saved! Let the disciples of Christ concentrate first on the individual heart. All history shows that national prosperity follows in the wake of religious revival. Moreover, all human schemes of reconstruction must be subsidiary to the second coming of the Lord, because all nations will then be subject to his rule. Forgetfulness of this last great revealed truth of Scripture often results in a zealous Christian's energies being frittered away in useless channels.

The American Home Bible Institute of Washington, D. C., promotes **home reading courses** for individual books of the Bible.

The plan of reading a selected book through a number of times during two months, each time from a different viewpoint, was inaugurated at the annual banquet of the Religious Work Department of the Washington Y. W. C. A. in 1920, and sprang into instant favor, over one hundred enrolling at the time. Since then the idea has spread until the suggestion sheets have been sent to readers in at least twelve states. Readers in the capital city are found in every walk of life, from high government officials to messenger boys and charwomen. A naval officer who read Amos, and who is not a Christian, said that he wished "every officer in the United States Navy would read that book over and over and over."

The original idea was to use these courses for vacation reading, but the growing usefulness of the plan suggests that a large number of those who so read one book will want to follow it immediately by the reading of another along the same lines; hence the development of the plan into regular home reading courses.

These courses are furnished free upon request; postage, printing and other expenses are paid for by free-will offerings of friends.

CHRISTMAS HERE AND THERE.

Glory! Hit's Chrismus!

'Gwine to git up early
An' sing a howdy song!
'Gwine to make a racket
Dat yo'll remembah long!
Nevah heah folks whispah
Dey Chrismus feelins, do yuh?
Dis ain't no time fo' silent prayah,—
Hit's time fo' Hally-loo-yuh!

The Sunday schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church surpassed all former records of giving in their offering last Christmas for the relief of the suffering children of Europe and Armenia. More than $400,000 was given for the little ones of Europe, around $100,000 for the Near East, and several thousand for China, though the need of the latter was not known at the time of launching the appeal and therefore not regularly included in it. The total given by the Sunday schools at Christmas time for the relief of suffering was the amazing sum of $532,000.

A young couple in Osaka, Japan, recently married, asked that a Sunday school be established in their home in the suburbs, which was too far distant for the children of the neighborhood to attend the central Sunday school. The young husband said:

"When we came to this neighborhood and realized that ours was the only Christian home in this section of the city, my heart yearned to let the people know we were Christians, and by some means impart to them the gospel message. This was just before Christmas, so I decided to place a Christmas tree in my shop window and put lighted candles on it at night with the hope that some one would come in to inquire the significance of the lighted tree. To my great delight I had the opportunity of telling the story of the Christ Child to many."

"A Present for Jesus."

It was Christmas Eve, and at an Indian mission station the workers of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission were preparing presents. A call was heard on the verandah. It came from one of the Zenana pupils from a village where the Bible-women work, and they supposed that she had come for her annual present of material. After receiving her salaam one of the missionaries said that her gift was not ready, that it should be sent on to her at the New Year; but she interrupted, saying, with glistening eyes and a beaming smile:

"I haven't come for that; I have brought a present myself for the Lord Jesus. It will be his birthday tomorrow, and I want him to have this because I love him."

And from the fold of her sári she produced a four-anna piece!

"Explain This Christmas Business."

It was far back in the Ozark Mountains, where a Presbyterian Sunday school missionary was working. He had been visiting from house to house during the day and holding meetings in the schoolhouse every night. So seldom had the mountaineers enjoyed the privilege of preaching in this isolated community that they were glad to come, walking many miles, riding in conveyances of all kinds or on horseback, to attend the services. They filled the little log schoolhouse to overflowing.

The missionary was particularly attracted by a group seated on the front row. Every night they came, a worn, tired-looking woman with a little baby in her arms, and two other children, a boy and a girl, seated on either side of her. How hungrily she listened to the missionary! Now and then he could see her eyes glisten. He asked her at the close of one of the services where she lived.

"Four miles and a half through the woods," she replied.

"Let me drive you home tonight," said he; "surely you can't walk that distance every night."

"No," she replied cheerfully; "you see,

we have our old horse, and I hold the baby while the boy and girl ride behind the saddle."

The next day the Sunday school man called at their home. They were delighted to see him, and invited him in for the evening meal. After supper they invited him into the other room to sit with the family around the fire, "for," the mother said, "dad wants to ask you some questions."

There, in front of the fire, the father at the right leaning against the mantel, and the oldest boy on the opposite side,—a young man of twenty who could neither read nor write,—the father began:

"I wish you would explain this Christmas business to us. A year ago in December our neighbors over here got a box from the East, and they called it a 'Christmas box,' and they invited us over, and gave us candy and lots of good things to eat, and some cards that had Christmas wishes on them. I guess some of them are around here yet, aren't they, ma? Well, we asked them to tell us what they meant by Christmas, but they couldn't tell us very well, and ma allowed you'd know; so go on, and explain the whole business. I don't care nothing about it, but these youngsters run me just crazy about it."

This was not in a foreign land, but here in Christian America, in an isolated neighborhood twenty-five miles from a railroad.

Under the Mexican Sky.

How can a journeyman wordster paint you a Christmas picture such as I have it in my mind to paint you?

The Mexican night sky bending lovingly over the open school patio,—and somehow the Mexican night sky seems a bit more akin to the sky beneath which there were shepherds keeping watch over their flocks, than does the Northern sky under which all my former Christmases have been passed,—the patio filled with children, a dark tree in the midst, a hush of expectancy over us all!

And then a child's voice thin and clear, reciting one of the majestic prophecies of the Old Testament. A tiny point of light pierces the darkness, and the first candle is lighted on the Christmas tree. Another prophecy, another point of light. Finally, verse by verse the entire Christmas story, and tiny flame by tiny flame the tree becomes a burst of light, a torch in the darkness.

Here and there a song, fitting in as naturally as if it were a blossom on the tree itself,—"The First Noel," "Nazareth," "Holy Night,"—the sweet child voices carrying the exquisite notes high above our heads. And here and there too a living picture,—the shepherds, the wise men, the young mother,—all beautifully conceived and reverently executed.

That was Christmas in Guadalajara, in the Congregational school, the Instituto Colon. I think the directora of the school, Marguerita Wright, brought the custom over from Barcelona in Spain, where she taught for several years. There is no copyright on it,—she'll be willing to loan the idea. Only she can't loan the Guadalajara sky, and I am sure that therein lay half the charm; for I may have been mistaken, but I thought I heard a brush of wings from out that sky that night, and I am almost sure I heard the stars join in the singing.—Helen Grace Murray.

Christmas in Burma.

Bright and early the day before Christmas the Sunday school teachers had gone out to different parts of the village to call their Sunday schools to the central school for the Christmas fête. Here they come, a long line of children marching two by two, and each child carrying a bamboo stick with a little bright colored paper pennant on it. Each Sunday school has a different color, adding to the brightness of the scene. When they are all in and seated on the floor,—three hundred of them,—they present an animated and beautiful sight. The schoolroom is decorated with Christmas bells, paper chains, bright pictures, and in front is a large motto in Burmese, which reads, "Jesus Christ the Saviour's birthday."

The Sunday school teachers, who are also teachers in the day school, Bible women, or those in training, are present, happy and alert to direct the children and make the occasion a glad one. The bright faces of the children might almost make one forget all else, but the variety of costume could not be overlooked. An occasional youngster appeared in the "brown satin in which he

was born"; while others held in their arms the garments they were supposed to wear; but most were neatly and cleanly dressed, from the three-year-old baby whose crowning glory was a brown sola topi decorated with a pink tissue paper flower to the tiny girl who came after the exercises were over, so powdered and beflowered that her head looked like a fantastic basket of flowers. Such a toilet is not made in a hurry.

All sang "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know," and a short prayer was offered. The story of the wise men and the Christ Child was told by a Burmese woman with the aid of leaf cluster pictures. Then followed a few remarks by the "Saya Gyi from India, who seventeen years ago had purchased at auction for Rs. 500 the building in which we were. It was then a police station where criminals were brought, and even yet are found the iron rings on the posts to which desperados were once made fast."

This vari-colored scene changes faster than the sunset,—these excited little folk cannot be long detained,—but each Sunday school must contribute something to the program, so they rise in turn and sing in the Burmese language, "When Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," "Precious Name," "There's a Song in the Air," and others. What matter if some of the voices are out of pitch or off the tune? All are happy, and "make a joyful noise." Many babies are present, and sometimes add to the noise. They do not understand much, but their "little mothers" could not come unless their charges were welcomed, and I vote for them a double welcome.

The time for closing has come, and the baskets filled with paper bags and the mysterious rolls are still untouched, and the gay pennants still waving. One little school rises to march out, but as they reach the door each child, in exchange for his pennant, is presented with a bag and a roll. We need not explain that the bright flags serve another purpose as well as adding to the appearance of the procession. Each bag, we learn, contains peanuts, biscuits and sweets, with a ball for a boy and a tiny rice pot for each girl. The rolls are pictures of varying sizes, averaging perhaps 10 by 16 inches. These have been cut out from magazines, cleverly combined and framed with strips of bright red or blue paper.

But who made all the preparation and met the expense of this Christmas celebration, attended so largely by Buddhist boys and girls? That is the best part of the story. The entire expense is met by the central Sunday school, which also meets its own expense and is organized into a missionary society, giving its collection the first Sunday of each month to missions. The missionaries have helped in planning and directing the work which has also been done by the members of the Sunday school. Would that every village in Burma had such a Sunday school!—Emma Stockwell Price.

First Fête after the War.

On 22nd December we had our mothers' fête. It was only right that they should have the first of the fêtes after the terrible years of anguish without any news of their husbands and sons, who were falling, many of them, in the trenches, while they dragged their little ones along the road of exile, often going without food that the children might be fed. So what a joy for them was this little fête made expressly for them! How heartily they sang the hymns, "Ecoutez, Un Saint Cantique," "Il est un Jour où le Doux Nom de Jésus est Plus Doux Encore," and "Venez au Sauveur Qui Vous Aime." After prayers and the reading of the beautiful story of "Noel," heard by some for the first time, M. Pannier spoke to these dear people. They were forty-six listening to the message of faith and hope and love, and it was in a truly solemn and happy spirit that we joined in the prayer of thanksgiving. After a good hot cup of chocolate and a cake they left, each with a parcel of useful clothes for themselves and their little ones.

The next day it was the turn of the younger children. After school we lit the Christmas tree, and how proud they were! But the verses they learnt and the stories they heard made them understand that "noblesse oblige." Many will join the Band of Hope, others will sign the pledge not to tell untruths, and will try always to be first, Sunday and Thursday, at the school; never to forget the Testament, to behave well, to have hands clean and hair tidy!

They seem to enjoy all these recommendations, and how heartily they sing the sweet hymns! Then they take their places and have a good "goûter" of chocolate and cakes and each a delightful present.

An hour after comes a group of lads, pioneers of the Y. M. C. A. just beginning.

The tree is lit up for the third time, and they learn three new hymns, and two ask to sing over those that they knew before the War "when they were quite small." Then they enjoy their chocolate and cake, and leave delighted with a knife, purse, or pair of gloves. It is 11 o'clock! We must get home in the dark and in the mud, but no matter,—"on trouvera bien encore où mettre les pieds."

The true "jour de Noël" at 5 o'clock is the great day so ardently longed for by the children. They have been talking about it for weeks past. The tree must look especially beautiful today. The teachers have worked hard to prepare the ninety-two parcels, bags of bon-bons and oranges. The church has the school fête the same day, but we could not unite, for we were too many; so, after the story from Luke's gospel, two hymns well sung, and a short story, M. Pannier, and soon M. Allison, came in to speak to us.

How well they sang the hymn specially learnt, "Le Ciel est Noir, la Terre est Blanche," these boys and girls! Their eyes are sparkling with joy, and they are so good and well-behaved while the distribution is made. Many parents came and had to stand, having to see their little ones safely back, carrying them often through the mud in the dreadful roads, with their pocket lamps to light them.

Then Sunday was the fathers' day, but the mothers and children were welcomed also. There were 170 persons and only 99 chairs, but what matters that? All were so happy and contented. The tree was lit up again. We sang, "Minuit Chrétien," "La Prière des Ruines," "Les Larmes des Mères." A choir of men sang, "Venez, Amis, Partons pour la Sainte Guerre." Many heard for the first time the true story of the Lord, and what he is for those who trust him. The fathers were as glad to receive their presents as were the children, for here any and everything counts and is of value, if not indispensable, and so dear.

So the first Christmas after the War we could celebrate was in the old hall, Faubourg d'Isle, which seemed very attractive among the ruins. May the Lord bless all that has been done in his name!—"McAll Record."

People at home can assist missionaries to give Christmas cheer at stations abroad by means of the mails. A missionary in West China makes the need very clear, and shows some of his own problems. "Now in regard to Christmas, we missionaries are every year placed at our wits' ends in planning what we can give these little people in the way of small gifts, etc., to help make them as happy as possible. And it is anything but easy to make our gifts go the rounds. And what we do for a few we should do for all. Last year a kind lady from Toronto sent me eighteen little dolls, some handkerchiefs, side combs, etc., but one of the greatest disappointments I have ever witnessed among children and their mothers was when we had to pick out those eighteen little girls to give each one a doll. While they were more than overjoyed the disappointment of the other 200 odd little ones was almost too much for me. So I determined that before another Christmas came around I would try to have a foreign doll for each of these little girls."

The Surplus Material Department of the World's Sunday School Association, 216 Metropolitan Tower, New York City, will send you the name of a missionary if you will indicate your denomination in writing for the information. Every year this department is the means of having thousands of packages sent by parcel post to many missionaries. A leaflet has been prepared which offers numerous suggestions. The usual parcel post charge is 12 cents per lb. in packages not exceeding 11 lbs., though any number of packages can be forwarded to the same party.

The large Bible picture rolls and small Bible lesson pictures are also eagerly asked for, as well as any good picture. It would also be fine to add some thoughtful remembrance for the missionary, or the little ones in his family.

There is no time to lose if any reader wishes to coöperate with any missionary, at home or abroad, for this Christmas.

THE MISSION FIELD.

The Christian Literature Society of Japan is publishing the late Prof. Kashiwai's translation of McIntosh's "The Doctrine of the Person of Christ." "It will rank as the most important publication in the Christian literature of Japan."

The story of a communion service at Loudon, Nyasaland, where **a leper communicant** had to partake of the wine out of a leaf formed into a cup, interested the Children's Missionary Class of a church in Edinburgh to subscribe for four silver cups and platters for the use of lepers out there.

Failing during several months to secure shipping accommodations for officers to go abroad, General Booth at last chartered the Calypso, of the Wilson Line, sailing from Hull on October 10 for Bombay. The Calypso has passenger accommodation for 126, and every berth was filled.

This is the first ship ever chartered to carry **a missionary party to India.**

Medical work in Rhodesia is handicapped by the native superstition that all disease is due to evil spirits who must be propitiated before a cure can be expected. The native fears contact with other sick persons, lest the influence of spirits be complicated. Hence hospitals are not possible, the sick must be sheltered in individual huts.

Poverty brings its tragedy into the deaths as well as into the lives of the masses of the Mexicans. Few are able to buy burial plots, and the custom of merely **renting vaults** for a short term of years has become general. The lease is often not renewed, and the bones are cast on a heap of millions of others to make room for a time for some other unfortunate.

Mexico abounds in holidays. Besides Sundays there is an equal number of saint's days, and additional holy and feast days to bring the total to 131 in the year.

A missionary in West Africa had for a helper in some building operations a man who was so bad the natives gave him a name which had for an equivalent in English **"Kerosene."** When asked why they had named him this they replied that he was so bad that when he died and went to hell Satan would have to use kerosene to make it hot enough for him. This man, however, came to know Christ as his Saviour, and the first money he earned after his conversion, two dollars and fifty cents, he dedicated to his Lord by handing the missionary two dollars.

Rev. W. L. McClenahan and his wife have hired a large Nile tourist steamer, dismantled of its engines, which will be towed up to the neighborhood of Assuan, with a view to the **rapid evangelization of the Nile valley,** working down stream. It will comfortably accommodate a large body of workers. A start was to have been made in the first week of October with a number of missionaries of both sexes and several Egyptian helpers. The Egypt General Mission is hoping to provide Mr. McClenahan with an average of four experienced missionaries a month.

Last June there was held in St. Francis Xavier's Church, New York City, a service in honor of **twenty Jesuit missionaries** who were to sail the next day for the Philippines. The flower of their clergy is represented in this group, made up largely of educators and administrators who have been connected with Roman Catholic colleges and higher schools in this country. The significance of the event lies in the fact that the Roman Church is making a strong and carefully planned effort to recover its hold on the Filipinos, and by the substitution of American priests for Spanish friars to establish once more ecclesiastical dominion in the Philippine Islands.

Four hundred years of unadulterated Romanism have produced two distinct classes: the ignorant and superstitious—often fanatical—peasants, who are easily stirred up to persecution by their priests, and the more or less educated class who still hold to the Romish Church as a social institution, but who at heart are utterly indifferent to all religion, writes a correspondent in Brazil.

"At one of my former stations I was on friendly terms with a politician who was a blatant atheist, and who lost no opportunity to deride all religion; and yet he had consented to stand as godfather in more

Graduating class of 1921 at the Pressly Memorial Institute, Assiut, Egypt. Miss Anna B. Criswell, principal, at the left; Miss Mary L. Thompson, her associate, at the right.

than a hundred baptisms, and had been accepted without question by the priests. Men who help carry images in a church procession will privately deny attaching any religious importance whatever to the ceremony. They do it for social or political reasons."

The Presbyterian mission at Sritamarat, **Siam,** enjoyed a visit from the Queen-aunt and her daughter, Princess Petchaburi, last summer. The queen remained about 15 minutes in the hospital, asked questions that showed considerable knowledge, drank tea with the staff, and made a present of 500 ticals (about $200) for hospital work. The princess accepted some fancy work made in the Girls' School, and some jams and jellies,—pine apple, mango, and other varieties. According to Siamese custom the teachers who bore the jams had to approach the princess on their knees, and having practised beforehand the presentation was made without mishap. On another occasion the princess sent 200 ticals as a gift to the school.

"This royal visit left me with a much better impression of royalty than I had had before," writes the Rev. Spafford Kelsey. "The queen and princess were more cordial and even more democratic than I had supposed. The gifts do not seem very large, but it is a surprise to me that members of the royal family should be willing to give anything to help a religion whose manifest aim is to displace their own national religion of Buddhism."

"We are in the midst of a **great awakening** here in Korea," writes Rev. R. T. Coit of Soochun, "and thousands are coming into the church and looking to us for guidance. We are face to face with a great opportunity, and we require supernatural power. May all true lovers of the Lord and his kingdom pray daily for all missionaries here and elsewhere, and for the native church, that we may be cleansed and empowered for this service!

"We have just closed the best mission meeting we have had in my thirteen years on the field. All reports were inspiring, and breathed fresh hope. We are planning a great Sunday school year all over Korea, as we prepare to lay fresh emphasis on reaching the young and plan to carry on a vigorous campaign to have extension Sunday schools in thousands of heathen villages, just as at Soochun and Kwangju and Mokpo, where from 1000 to 2000 are gathered in numbers of village Sunday schools and taught by native Christian volunteer workers. In this way many older people are won to Christ, and most of the

children whom we thus gather we later bring into our Christian day schools, or start such a school in their villages."

The English Brethren, so called, have no board to afford an outlet for their missionary interest, but get results through a monthly magazine, "Echoes of Service," published in Bath. The editors of this magazine accept not only current gifts but also bequests "to be applied for such charitable objects" as they in their "uncontrolled discretion" may think fit.

Receipts for 1920 from all sources were £58,473, considerably higher than in any previous year. This was dispensed to laborers, schools, orphans, lepers, and sufferers in various lands, from Faroë to South Africa, and all around the world, with substantial sums for training and other special funds. "Our part does not consist in an effort to meet all needs of laborers. Were this the case their eyes might be taken from the Lord, and their dependence on him prejudicially affected."

This is the 50th year of issue of "Echoes of Service."

More laborers were sent out in 1920 than in any previous year,—32 brethren, and about the same number of sisters, besides several who had formerly been working abroad in connection with other agencies. Several countries were entered for the first time in 1920.

Japan's Quest.

Some time ago the young men in one of my fields organized themselves into an association for the purpose of self-improvement. They had no place to meet, and so requested the use of the church building for two nights in the month. We granted it. They then asked us if we would not address them, and on any subject we desired. From that time until now either my secretary or myself has spoken to them—thirty or more,—a number of times. Recently I was talking to them informally when one of them, representing the bunch, said:

"We have all been educated, and so have no lack in that direction, but we young men are looking for something else. Our heads are full, but our souls are empty and barren."

I replied: "You need Jesus."

He said: "Yes, I believe we need him. We have all come right up to the line where one step would take us across to him, and now the question with us is whether we shall take that step."

The above incident can safely be said to represent with more or less truth the whole of new Japan. When this country was first opened up to foreign intercourse sixty years ago Japan determined she would shut her eyes to the Christian religion and take all she could get of the civilization of Christian nations. She has come at last to see that this was a great mistake. Only in the last few days the government of this country has appointed a commission with instructions to make a thorough study of the leading religions of the world, and render a report at the end of three years. The purpose of this investigation is acknowledged to be to determine what religion Japan shall from this time forth adopt. This is just what the nation did when she was face to face with the problem of government, soon after her opening to other nations. The form of government she adopted was much like that of Germany. She has now decided to settle the question of religion. During these next few years, and until Japan makes her decision, the Christian forces will be looking on with intensest interest to see what she will do. May we pray and labor that God will at last open the eyes of Japan to the truth!—Rev. J. Woodrow Hassell, Marugame, Sanuki Province.

CHINA.

One writes of a Chinese Christian who was **beaten a thousand strokes** by his uncle's order because he would not perform ancestral worship.

The Shanghai American School was founded nine years ago for the children of missionaries and other Americans. It has grown to be a school of 200, eighty of whom are boarders. Many missionaries are able to postpone for years separation from their children because of this school.

Co-education for China was voted at the National Educational Conference in 1919. The same body discussed ways and means of encouraging co-education last year. The Peking Government University

has opened its doors to girls, and has begun with a small number of co-eds. The Nanking Teachers' College has over a hundred girl students.

Shanghai College has founded a **Christian Home Club** with the idea of Christianizing the Chinese family by addresses, exhibits, and personal experience, of Christian and non-Christian students equally, in the Christian homes of the faculty.

The experiment is one that might be tried at home no less than abroad, since there are many even in America who know nothing of true Christian home life.

Anglican missions in all parts of China were united in 1912 into the **Chinese Holy Catholic Church,** a name that is neither foreign nor sectarian. It now has eleven dioceses in China, and among its bishops is one Chinaman. It is a self-governing church, and has its own board of missions.

At the last general synod all the lay delegates and half the clerical to which are Chinese, it was decided to open a united college in Nanking for the training of Chinese for the priesthood. The Lambeth Appeal was indorsed, and the committee on unity was instructed to send a copy with a covering letter to the heads of all Christian churches and missions in China. Resolutions were adopted proposing practical measures to bring about unity.

In a paper on **"Hospital Evangelism"** read before the Medical Missionary Association of China Dr. Douglas Gibson of Kaifeng indicated two ways in which the gospel should be making its influence felt all day long in hospital wards; but his words have a general bearing. One he called "the presentation of the gospel by touch of hand," that is, by the kindly, patient and skilful way that every employee should go about treatment of the individual. The other he named "the presentation of the gospel by the attitude of mind," which is sure to be noticed by the patient and to influence him toward gratitude or resentment. "The attitude of mind of Christ Jesus toward sick folk was that of impartial compassion. What he said, the way he looked, the tone in which he spoke, the manner in which he did things, won the hearts of men."

An orphanage with over 400 little children is part of the work of the China Inland Mission station at Saratsi, Shansi. These children have all been rejected by their parents just when born, and they would likely have been eaten by hungry street dogs or they would have died from exposure, as the following case shows.

A beggar woman brought a pitiful being. It was a little girl, found lying naked on the ground not far from the temple of the God of Riches. The wind blew very cold that morning, and exposed to the wind as the little one had been it was almost stiff with the cold. The hungry dogs had taken a bite in one foot, and marks of their attack could also be seen in the face and elsewhere. "Do you think we could shut the door against this little outcast? No, it was impossible! And we know you had found it so too, had you been present." The ladies were at once ready to use means by which to get the little one warm and to nurse the fast-going baby-life aflame again. Their efforts did not show much success at first, however. The abused little body lay lifeless, it appeared, the whole day and until the middle of the night. Then it commenced to get warm, the baby-life won the victory, and the little girl was snatched both from the hungry dogs and death. This girl is the 987th in number, and was called "Hai-uan," which means: THE ABUSE IS ENDED.

"We could tell you a lot about our girls, had we the time," writes Mr. Emil Johnson. "Suffice it to say that they are generally very good. They are brought up in a Christian atmosphere, and learn to pray and sing from their very babyhood, and they frequently tell the heathen about the love of Jesus. One girl by name of Pah-ieh-tsi was called away not long ago. She had been very sickly all her life. Her disposition was not of the very best, and she was not much liked by her sisters. She was, however, marvelously converted before she died, and she was sure of the pardoning grace and of a place in the heavenly mansions. 'Tonight I will be in Paradise,' she said to her sisters a little before her departure, and with 'Jesus! J—e—s—u—s!' upon her lips her spirit ascended to the celestial world."

INDIA.

A mission to the aristocracy of India is carried on by one Mr. John Chowdhuri, who "has felt a definite call from God to bring India's royalties and other leaders into touch with Christian influence." A booklet regarding this mission and its methods has been published.

Last year a committee of **undergraduates in Madras** wrote a letter to thank the British and Foreign Bible Society for the usual gift of New Testaments to the first-year class. "We are glad," they said, "to have the opportunity of studying the life of the man who practised what he preached."

India has 320,000,000 people, of whom only 3,000,000 are Christians. She has 147 languages, ten of them spoken by more than 10,000,000 people each, and yet only one in 26 of her Mohammedans, one in 18 of her Hindus, and one in six of her Christians can read and write. Of the 700,000 villages of India more than half a million have **no primary schools.**

The joint committee on union of the Episcopal Synod of the Church of England in India and Ceylon on the one hand, and the South India United Church on the other, held its third meeting in Madras last summer. A report of progress was submitted to the Episcopal Synod and the church General Assembly,—not a final report.

It reads as if the union will be dominated by the bishop in each proposed diocese,—in fact, the Episcopalians would just gobble up the others.

"The first constructive policy for **training Indian physical directors** became a reality in August 1920," writes H. C. Buck, director of Physical Education of the Madras Y. M. C. A., "and five choice young men have just graduated from a detailed intensive course in the theory and practice of physical education.

"The Madras Association has been made the training center, and the length of the course at the outset has been placed at nine months, although this may be lengthened at some future time. The one feature of the course which we feel to be worthy of particular mention is that hand in hand with their training the men acquired daily practical experience in various Madras schools, Y. M. C. A.'s, and public playgrounds.

"The task of recruiting the right kind of Christian young men with sufficient educational qualifications is very difficult," he continues, "and this task demands the cooperation of Y. M. C. A. secretaries and mission schools all over India, Burma and Ceylon.

"Past history has taught us that only as a nation is physically fit can that nation long endure. The future of India is in the hands of her young men, and in the field of scientific physical education they may find an opportunity to raise the national vitality, to solve moral and physical problems of the nation. The task demands the unselfish devotion and courageous conviction of the best of India's young men."

The "Madras Weekly Mail," having announced the death at Conjeveram, of Mr. J. Gopal Nair, an honorary magistrate of the town and a prominent social worker in the cause of the amelioration of the depressed classes, the Rev. A. Andrew wrote the following interesting facts to the "Record."

"Mr. Gopal Nair was one of my **caste Hindu converts** during the first stage of my missionary labors at Chingleput, near Madras. He was a native of Malabar, and left his abode there and visited the great temples of Southern India with a view to find peace to his soul. He found none, and came to Chingleput, and listened to a street preaching. I was preaching on the text, 'The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.' He was immediately arrested, and felt that Christ was a Saviour from sin.

"This led him to come to me at the mission bungalow, when I pointed out the way of salvation more fully. The town preachers did the same. After instruction for some time he said that he believed in Christ, and desired baptism. I baptized him in Chingleput, in 1887. Shortly after, he married a lady who was a sub-assistant surgeon.

"His wife is doing splendid work among the women of Conjeveram,—Hindu, Mohammedan and Christian,—and is greatly sought after. Her husband was very influential in that city. They have four daugh-

ters, who are all married to Christian graduates. There are several grandchildren. All this shows that through the conversion of one the Christian community grows and expands."

BURMA.

Since the days of the Karens no more wonderful unfolding of divine purpose has taken place than that **among the Naga tribe.** Here within the service of one missionary family, the Pettigrews, Christianity has attained a volume and impetus and initiative on absolutely virgin soil that is described as wonderful. It is a civilization founded in less than a generation.

The Nagas were formerly head-hunters, a naked race of savages. They are an agricultural people, and animists or spirit worshipers.

Describing briefly the movement in the "Baptist Missionary Review" for July, Rev. William Pettigrew gives figures of families becoming Christians in different villages, a total of 2112 persons in this tribe. At a three-day conference three natives were set aside for the special work of evangelization during this year. Thirteen villages have mission schools. Teachers were assigned to open schools in other villages which have shown a desire to know and accept the gospel.

The movement has to face opposition and persecution by the tribal chief and elders, but Mr. Pettigrew is satisfied that it is of God.

The 13th annual meeting of the **Maymyo Bible Assembly** held last spring had for its general topic "Christian Citizenship." Prayer meetings, Bible classes and conferences were held mornings, the afternoons were left free for rest and recreation, and the evening sessions given to addresses on aspects of Christian citizenship.

"The meetings were full of power," writes Dr. Selden R. McCurdy, "and of unique interest owing to the topic and its bearing on the present situation here, where the people are pressing for a wider local self-government, and where a considerable lot of untoward incidents have come up to mar the harmony of governmental arrangements. This whole East is in a ferment, but fortunately up to now the trend has been for a non-violent campaign and this has saved us from a possible 'mutiny' experience. The Burman has sometimes been called in the past the Irishman of the East. He seems to give evidence now of having some of the tenacity as well as the happy-go-lucky traits of the past that gave him the name. In fact, Irish experience is a goodly part of inspiration of some of the would-be political leaders of the present. It is a trying time for us all."

A class in Ginling College, Nanking, China.

CHRIST THE SAVIOUR.*

Rev. J. Stuart Holden, D. D.

At the outset let us remember the danger that always lurks in considering Christ as the Saviour of yesterday, the danger of confusing the historical fact of redemption with the present processes by which its benefits are conveyed to us; in other words, the danger of regarding Christ the Saviour as One who did something rather than as One who is doing something, as a great historical figure rather than as a present and contemporary figure. It is Christ the same yesterday, today and forever, Christ who because he did something in the past is doing something in the present, that I want to speak with you about this morning, —Christ the present Saviour of his people.

In announcing the purpose of his mission and ministry he did so in these terms, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," and right over the life of Christ that word might stand as a shining and interpreting motto. Wherever you meet Christ, whatever he is saying, whatever he is doing, whatever he is implying, it is consistent with this great governing purpose. It coördinates all his activities, it embraces all his relationships with men. All his interpretation of the past, of his illumination of the present, of his opening up of the future, is consistent with this great word, and is indeed an explanation of it in living terms. He came to save that which was lost; and the glory of the evangel which it is his church's mission to minister to the world, is just this, that he is able to save UNTO THE UTTERMOST,—from the uttermost point of time to the uttermost confines of eternity, from the uttermost depth of ruin unto the uttermost height of an unsullied and unchanged purpose of divine holiness.

"The Son of man is come to seek and to save." This, I say, was the dominant consciousness of Christ's life, and it is echoed in the early Christian witnesses, who declare nothing less than salvation through his name. The earliest Christian witnesses constantly referred to him in this term, "Christ our Saviour." He had done something for and in them which they realized had saved them from something and saved them unto something. They defined their own experience in these terms: "who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling." They proclaimed what they called a "common salvation," and they set forth as the fullest measure of his power and glory his ability to save the whole world. On the very first page of the New Testament, the record of their witness and experience, in Matthew 1. 21, you find the word which declares the contents of the whole book, just as the title page of any other book bears something which prepares you for what you are going to read: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." So it is quite impossible even to approach Christ or to read the New Testament in the most casual way without realizing that the great teacher is more than a teacher, that the One who is recognized as a teacher come from God is more than that, he has come to save.

LOST AND SAVED.

Now, in order to enter into the significance of this work, may I try to explore with you something of the content of those contrasting terms "saved" and "lost."

Christ obviously regarded men as being lost, but what did he mean by it? Did he mean that men were lost in the sense of their ultimate destiny, or did he mean that men were immediately and presently lost to the true purpose of their lives? Did Christ merely come to save men who if they did not change their way of living would be lost, or did he come to save men who were already lost?

I contend that any sane and unbiased reading of all he said and all the gospel records emphasizes the latter of those alternatives. Christ looked upon men as being already lost to the true purpose for which they were created by God. He saw that fellowship with God, for which man was made, was ruptured, and in consequence life's powers were squandered, life's faculties were deranged, its instincts had become uncontrolled, its impulses were un-

* Delivered at the Northfield General Conference, August 1921.

guided, its capacities were imprisoned, and consequently its destiny was diverted from that which God had ordained. He illustrated the meaning of all this by the three parables of lostness,—the parable of the lost sheep, the parable of the lost silver, the parable of the lost son. The sheep was lost to the true purpose of its being and its ownership. The silver was out of circulation and was simply lying worthless. The son, who had been born for fellowship not only with the love of his father, but with the interests which he shared in common with his father, was lost to that true purpose of his life, and it was to save men who were thus lost to that for which God had made them that Christ came.

In the second place, he regarded his mission as one of restoration. To save men is to restore them to that broken fellowship. Let me use an illustration.

Sin has cleft a great gulf, a great chasm between God and men, between men and God, and Christ has two things to do in regard to that chasm. If he is going to save men who are lost he must build a bridge, and then—and this is important,—having built the bridge he must induce men to cross it. Having built the bridge, he must not only induce men to cross it, he must enable men to cross it.

There you have in the simplest terms of which I am a master a picture of what Christ did and of what Christ does. By his life and his death he has built the bridge; that is the Christ of yesterday. That is completed, that is a great objective eternally related, which nothing can ever interfere with. But now the present work of Christ in the world, Christ the Saviour, is to induce men, first, to see their need of a bridge, then to desire to cross the bridge, and then to enable them, to empower them, to quicken their instincts and make it possible for them to come back into fellowship with God, apart from which life is altogether incomplete, altogether imperfect, and being diverted, as I have said, from its true destiny.

Let me try to put it in a simple formula for you. The righteousness of God demanded an atoning sacrifice, in which Christ built the bridge. The state of man demands both illumination and inspiration, and that is the great work of Christ the Saviour. And all this must be capable indefinitely of personal application, because the sin that ruptures fellowship is an individual act, and Christ, if he is to save men, must save them in the unit and not in the mass. Mark you, while Christ envisaged the whole world it is the individual he invites. While Christ loved the world and gave himself for the world it is to individuals that the great redemptive powers that center in him and flow from him must be ministered.

Christ's Problem.

Now consider Christ's problem, the problem of saving the world one by one.

Christ has to save a man from himself, from his folly, from his weakness, from his sin; so that a man who is lost begins to find himself, a man who is actually dead begins to live, a man only one side of whose perceptions are functioning shall begin to live in all the instincts of his being. Christ's problem is to bring the discords of life into harmony with God's will. Christ's problem is to compose the endless strife—and who is not conscious of it?—between fitful desires to rise and constant tendencies to fall, between our high ideals and our low and gravitating instincts. Christ's problem is to free an individual being from the influences of a handicap which he has partly inherited and partly created, but which is wholly effective in vitiating every moral effort a man makes. Christ's problem is to create a consciousness of the possibility of life in him, and to establish an indubitable experience of it here and now, and to found a confidence in man's being that that life will project itself into eternity. That, in the fullest way that I can state it, is Christ's problem.

What is wrong with the world today? Well, what is wrong with us? You and I are just a world in miniature, and the warring passions and tendencies that we find in ourselves we see multiplied indefinitely in the world. We never understand humanity until we understand ourselves, never! You will never understand the world problem that confronted the Saviour until you see the problem that confronts the Saviour in your life. You will never understand the great scope of redemption, and you will never understand so as to appreciate the unresting energy of the Son of God, until you

understand the problem of your own moral nature and the actual facts and circumstances into which it has brought you.

I put it in these terms, my friends, because there is nothing speculative about this, nothing abstruse or abstract, nothing merely theoretical; but this state of things that I have mentioned actually challenges Christ in every man he meets,—in you and me, and hence in the whole world. Christ comes to you and me, Christ comes to men and women who have already discovered in their own nature a bias toward evil, and who have already learned its extent and strength by their futile efforts to keep God's law. The strength of sin is the law. When you come with any degree of honest intention to try to keep the law of God, then you begin to know your own nature. Christ comes to us as to men who are already familiar in part with the positively insatiable needs and instincts in our own nature, the demands which we make upon life. Christ comes to men and women who are already convinced both of the irresoluteness of their own beings and of their mysterious immortality, who are already convinced that they have a strange and mysterious link with the eternal and the unseen world. And I say again, this is the problem of Christ, Can men of moral bias, of insatiable demands, of irresolute nature and of immortal being be readjusted? Can they find themselves? Can they be saved from all these things?

And let me say, Christ's problem is, further, Can such men be saved from the sins of the publican without falling into the sins of the Pharisee? That is a great problem of Christ. Can he save you and me so that we will never congratulate ourselves on being heaven's favorites, so that we will never look upon ourselves with deadening and almost damning self-complacency, as though by our own efforts, as though by our own unaided strength and purer purpose than that which rules the world, we had arrived at some great pinnacle or platform of holiness and character? That is Christ's problem.

Having stated the problem, let me try to state to you further Christ's equipment for dealing with this problem of human salvation, Christ's equipment to be the Saviour of men.

Christ's Equipment.

Firstly I suggest to you Christ's consciousness that in coming to attempt to solve this great problem, he has come from God and is working with God.

Christ never for a moment loses his consciousness that the Father who sent him is with him. There is no thought in Christ's mind, as I read the Gospels, of producing a change in God's attitude toward men. Christ has come to declare God, not to influence God. There is no idea in Christ's mind of procuring God's goodwill for men: why, he is the very channel of the communication of that goodwill! There is no attempt on Christ's part to do something which is going to reconcile God to the world: he has come to reconcile the world to God,—God is already reconciled to the world.

I know that I am saying something which cuts right across the false and commonly held notion which has made many thinking men and women turn in involuntary distrust from a great deal that is called evangelism, for the gospel has been preached in such terms as this: The Father is all power, the Son is all pity; the Father is all majesty, the Son is all mercy; the Father is all anger against sin, the Son is all anguish for sins; and Christ by coming and living and dying did something to change God's attitude. That lie was coined in hell. That lie has deceived half the world. Listen to Christ! "I and my Father are one" in purpose; "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself"; "God hath sent him forth to be the propitiation for our sins." That is the note on which the whole harmony of the gospel is built and based. And, my friend, there is nothing more reasonable; just as there is nothing more unreasonable than to think that Christ did something to change an angry God into a loving one. If that has ever held our minds, let us lose that thought for ever! Christ the Saviour came to reveal the Father's heart of eternal love. That is the first part of Christ's equipment for dealing with the problem.

Secondly, it is Christ's confidence in the love of God which he was sent to manifest.

Christ believes that if only men can realize the nature of God their Father, if they can only realize his love, their fear will be removed, penitence will be created by love

suffering and sacrificing for them, a passion for holiness will be generated, that is, for correspondence with him, and gratitude will generate a purpose which shall become a despotic influence if men can only realize that God loves them. It is not untrue, I think, to say that Christ would have come to earth in any case as the revealer of God's love in order to secure fellowship for men with God, but sin and its complicated problems made it inevitable that Christ must reveal God's love in terms of suffering, that God's love must be revealed in terms of unspeakable sacrifice; and hence it is that he not only came and loved and taught and declared the love of God, but he died, love suffering to the utmost in the sins of the loved one.

Oh, my friend, the cross of Calvary is more than a mere demonstration of the love of God! The death of Jesus has no justification whatever apart from its redemptive and atoning significance. If the cross of Christ, as some would affirm, is merely a pulpit it is gruesome in the last degree; but that which is gruesome as a pulpit is ever glorious as an altar, and round it men will gather in gratitude and humble thanksgiving while life lasts in them.

Christ's Success.

Having looked at the problem, having stated a word or two as to Christ's equipment for solving the problem, let me, thirdly and lastly, consider with you how Christ the Saviour solves the problem and actually effects the salvation of men.

Firstly, he declares that we belong to God,—a very simple thing to say, but one of those great, simple, neglected truths for the loss of which the world perishes, and with the possession of which men are really saved. Christ declares that we belong to God, and that every capacity and attitude of our being is stamped with God's image and superscription.

Christ begins not as I fear some of his errant and misguided preachers and interpreters begin, by telling men they do not belong to God, but that they belong to the devil. Christ never begins there: he begins by telling men they belong to God. Christ begins not by declaring our differences from God, but our affinities with God. Christ begins by declaring that God is the Father, he has made us for himself; and in so doing he gets us to look the other way. We have been looking the wrong way; our lives need to be reorientated. He gets us to see our true affinities, which are not with earth at all, but with heaven; not downward, but upward. First of all, Christ enables men, by declaring that they belong to God, to take their true bearings; and until you have learned to take your moral bearings the map of life can never be read, never!

And he interprets men and women to themselves. He lets us realize and he forces us to believe that our unrest, these insatiable demands of our nature which send us to broken cisterns that can hold no water, are part of the relationship which has been ruptured between man and God declaring itself in spite of things. Just as the opposing pull of the moon and the earth causes the tides, so the opposing pull of what God made us for and what we have become causes all the unrest in our hearts.

In the second place, he not only declares that we belong to God, but he declares the love of God and the atoning and redeeming sacrifice of himself in which it is fully and finally expressed.

By his death Christ has done something for men they could never do for themselves. By his death the handicap is removed. His death, his cross, is the sign of a great cancellation. He is the way back to God for all men. The bridge has been made: that is what Christ declares. He inspires the assurance, by setting his seal of death upon the work of his life, that the sin question is settled for ever and ever, and that men may be saved in the full sense of that word, if they will be saved.

And yet we all realize there is something more necessary than that. As I said, he has not only to build the bridge, he must induce men to use it. A moral imperative must attach to every spiritual promise and enduement if it is not merely to minister to our self-content and deception; for, after all, doing is the part of believing that really matters.

There was an old coal miner in the county of Durham in England who was brought to realize that God loved him, and that Christ died for him, and that he might come back to God from whom he had wandered; and his testimony after the great

event and the constant experience of his life had established peace, was put into verse by Dora Greenwell. Here is the pitman speaking:

It wasn't that I should spend my life
Just as my life's been spent,
That he brought me so near to his mighty cross,
And told me what it meant.

He does not need me to die for him,
He only wants me to live.
There is nothing of mine that he wants but my heart,
And that's all I have to give.

That is how Christ solves the problem. He declares to men that they belong to God, that God loves them, that his own life is imparted to them, making it possible to come back to God, to rise above all that would condemn and keep them down in their own past and under the power of their own conscience. By his spirit, by his own life imparted to men, Christ applies to our lives the benefits of his redemption. You get it all in one single sentence at the opening of the fifth chapter of Romans, "If we have been reconciled to God by the death of his Son, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." That is, if the bridge has been built by his death, you and I shall walk the bridge and enter into fellowship with the Father by the imparted life of Christ.

One last word. The bridge was built once for all and once forever. Christ the Saviour did something that shall never be repeated. He is doing something that shall never be interrupted now, in order to save men. And those two things must go together,—the thing he did which can never be added to, the thing he is doing which must never be interrupted. Those two are the ground not only of a salvation in which I believe without any assurance, but of a salvation which I experience and which expresses itself in all the activities of a renewed life day by day. Ah, this salvation and this alone answers to the need set up by the bias and the demand and the irresoluteness and the immortality of our nature at which we have already looked!

And, blessed be God, there is a point of contact for every one of us, there is a point of contact for every man born of woman! Who then can be saved, we ask, as we look at Christ the Saviour in all the greatness of his work and of his purpose yet unfulfilled? There is a point of contact. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, I myself! If any man hear my voice and open the door, I myself will come in to him, will live with him, will enter into fellowship with him, will be to him the way back to God from whose will and love he has wandered and fallen." O friend, there is the answer to the great but often inarticulate cry of the world, "What must I do to be saved?" There is the answer,—faith in the finished work of the Lord Christ who died, and that justifies it; faith in the unfinished work of Christ, the work that is going on still in you and me, by which we are saved.

It is characteristic of the ministry of Christ the Saviour that he used three words constantly: lost, last and least. On these words our Lord built and based the harmony of his entire life of bright and rich and still unexplored promise: the lost saved, the last first, the least greatest. What a Saviour! Well may our hearts bow in adoring worship, and our lives express themselves in endless praise and in unmeasured service to him who came at such cost to himself, and abides with us forever!

CHRIST AND SOCIAL UNREST.*

Rev. John McDowell, D. D.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Matthew 11. 28.

I have selected this old and familiar text because it offers the only solution of the most important problem of our day, namely, the problem of social unrest.

This problem is not new; it is as old as the human race. Every generation has had to meet it in one form or another. Twice before in modern times has there been a deep and wide-spread discontent

* First of a series delivered at the Northfield General Conference, August 1921.

among the people, once on the eve of the great Reformation in the 16th century, and again on the eve of the French Revolution in the 18th century. The first of these movements was primarily religious; the second was political; the third, through which we are now passing, is social and economic. The first destroyed religious despotism; the second struck the death blow to political despotism; the third promises to put an end to social and economic despotism. The social unrest of our day is new only because it is more extensive than ever before, more intensive than in any other period, and more radical than at any other time in human history.

Whatever the social unrest of our day may mean to the other institutions of human society, to the home, the school, the court and the state, there can be no doubt as to what it means to the church.

First, the present social unrest is a condemnation of the church for not making Christianity big enough for the needs of the world.

Mark you, I do not say, a condemnation of Christianity, but a condemnation of the church. The church has given Christianity a splendid individualistic interpretation, an attractive ceremonial interpretation, an elaborate theological interpretation, but it has failed to give Christianity a social interpretation, and the present social unrest is positive evidence of this failure.

Much of our present international, industrial and social unrest is due to the failure of the church to insist that if Christ is to be master anywhere he must be master everywhere. Had the church insisted that Christians cannot exclude their business, their politics, their industry and their national and international interests from his sovereignty, the present world unrest would have been impossible. The present social unrest is a direct condemnation of the church for not teaching that "his kingdom ruleth over all,"—over all railroads and coal mines, over all steel mills and cotton factories, over all stores and schools, over all congresses and churches, over all national and international obligations. A fractional Christ cannot yield a whole Christianity, and without a whole Christianity, a Christianity that is a law for life, for all life, as well as a way of salvation for all men, the problem of unrest cannot be solved.

May God lead the church to repent of her failure to give Christianity a social as well as an individual interpretation!

Second, the present social unrest is a direct and definite challenge to the church to make Christianity all that Christ intended it to be in the world.

That Christ intended Christianity to be the dominant and regulative factor in all of man's relationships and obligations is perfectly apparent from his teachings as recorded in the New Testament.

In the summary of the law, Matthew 22. 37-39, he defines religion in two commandments, Love thy God, and love thy neighbor. This definition covers all of man's life and includes all of his obligations. Obedience to the first command saves the individual, obedience to the second saves society. There can be no doubt that Christ meant the second command to govern men in all of their relations with one another precisely as he meant the first command to govern in all of men's relations with God.

That Christ intended Christianity to dominate all life is apparent also from the symbols he used in describing what his disciples would be to the world. He said, "Ye are the salt of the earth, the light of the world, the leaven of society." Christ claims the whole earth, the whole world, the whole of human society as the sphere of Christianity.

These and many other teachings of the New Testament indicate that Christ expected Christianity to conquer all peoples, to sweeten all relationships, to sanctify all activities, to satisfy all the longings of the soul, to solve all the problems of human society.

The Solution Christ Offers.

The solution Christ offers for the present unrest is found in the three elemental laws of Christianity.

First, the law of regeneration, by which Christ changes the nature of man and ultimately the nature of society.

Christ recognized that personality is more fundamental than environment or relation-

ships. He knew that man's environment and relationships could not be right while man himself was wrong. He knew man. He knew human nature was selfish, and that there could be no salvation either for the individual or for society which did not save from selfishness. All efforts had failed to save men and society from selfishness. The ritualism of the Jews had failed, the culture of the Greeks had failed, the legalism of the Romans had failed. Ritualism, culture and legalism will refine and polish selfishness, but they cannot change it or remove it. Reformers usually attack the evils of society from without. Christ saw to the heart of things and attacked social evils from within because he was more than a reformer. He was a regenerator and a saviour. Because he attacked social evils and unrest from within, let us not infer, as many socialists do in these days, that he did not attack them at all. Christ always treated the roots of social disease first, and its symptoms afterwards.

Christ attacked the roots of the problem of unrest by insisting that man must be born again, that the heart must be changed, that love of self must give place to love of God and love of neighbor. History and experience make it clear that there is no rest for man or for society as long as selfishness dominates, and that there is no salvation from selfishness apart from the regenerating power of Jesus Christ. Many are seeking rest today in a new environment, in new knowledge, in new systems of philosophy, sociology or religion, and are finding it not. The solution of our social unrest is not to be found in things or in systems. We must come back to the prayer of David the king. After trying every possible way to find rest, and finding it not, the old king finally cried out of a weary and disappointed life, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." The clean heart and the right spirit are still the only solution of individual and social unrest, and these can come only through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Second, the law of righteousness, by which Christ gave to men and society the divine standard of right for all life.

Through the new heart Christ gives men an inclination to do right, and through the new standard he gives them the principle by which they can determine what is right. That principle is embodied in the Golden Rule (Matthew 7. 12), "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." This principle is also stated in the second commandment in the summary of the law (Matthew 22. 37-39), "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

There can be no question but that much of our present social unrest is due to the failure of men and of society to obey the principle of righteousness as defined by Christ in his teachings. With many today right is determined solely by the law of supply and demand, the law of power, the law of success, the law of expediency. Men are not only claiming the right to define what is right; they are denying Christ's conception of right. Many so-called Christian men are telling us that Christian principles are no more applicable to business and industry and politics than to chemistry and botany and mathematics. The world war, and many of our industrial strikes, and much of our social unrest are the direct product of these antichristian teachings and practices. The modern world needs to hear those stirring words of Christ again, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5. 20).

It is evident from the teachings of the New Testament that Christ intended Christianity to be not only a way of salvation for sinners, but also a law for society. Only as his law is obeyed can the problem of social unrest be solved and society saved.

Third, the law of love, by which Christ gives to men a dynamic which will impel them to meet all their obligations to God and to society.

This dynamic is found in his law of love, which is not only the greatest thing in the world, but the greatest power in the world. Love is Christ's solution for every actual or possible problem in human life.

Christ trusted love at all times. He believed that love would discern all of the problems of life, that love would discover and apply true and effective remedies, that love would overcome all difficulties, that

love would transform and glorify all service and all sacrifice. It is the love-inspiring power of Christ that gives Christianity its saving, unifying and transforming influence in the life of men and of society. Love, according to the teachings of Christianity, is no mere maudlin sentiment, is no meek acquiescence in popular demand. It is a practical working principle; it is the fulfilment of all law, political, industrial and social.

Experience has confirmed Christ's faith in love as a working principle, not only in individual life, but in social life. Love is the only thing that makes all things work together for good (Romans 8.28). Love makes the home work together for good; nothing else will. Love makes the school work together for good; nothing else will. Love makes the church work together for good; nothing else will. Love makes the factory work together for good; nothing else will. Love makes the nation work together for good; nothing else will. Love makes the nations work together for good; nothing else will. Everything else has failed. Law has failed, education has failed, science has failed, organization has failed. Love, and love alone, can and will drive out of the human heart and out of the heart of society the devil of self-interest, which is the taproot of all the social unrest of our day.

How easily this principle of love applies itself to all our social problems! Love cannot enslave one's brother,—of course not; so slavery comes to an end. Love cannot exploit the weakness of one's brother, so the traffic in intoxicating liquors comes to an end. Love cannot exploit little children, so child-labor comes to an end. Love cannot overwork one's brother, so the long day and the long week come to an end. Love cannot underpay, so low wages come to an end. Love will not cheat, so limitation of production comes to an end. Love cannot override human rights, and hence industrial autocracy comes to an end. Love cannot be selfish, and so self-interest comes to an end. So down through the whole list of problems growing out of our social life, love has its own instant and final answer to every one of them. Love will demand that a man shall give a day's work for a day's pay, that a man shall earn all he gets and get all he earns.

The practical question facing us today is this, How shall I treat my brother who is associated with me as my neighbor, my employer, my employee, my customer? It is hard to find a better answer than that given by John Stuart Mill, Always do the loving thing. Then the broken chords in the heart of society will vibrate once more, not by legislation, nor even by education, but by faith that worketh by love.

To exalt Jesus Christ in the fulness of his gospel is to meet the world's need of a Saviour and a Lord who can and will solve the world's problem of social unrest.

THAT THE MINISTRY BE NOT BLAMED.*

LECTURE II. Condensed.

Rev. John A. Hutton, D. D.

There may be long stretches of time when, so far as we see, nothing very remarkable is taking place in the world. Or, if great things are taking place, there are stretches of time when for one reason and another we are not aware of them. These flat and tame times may come after a period of great agitation; for that is true of larger aggregates of mankind, we can only endure strain and anguish up to a certain point.

But there is something in man which after a time compels him once again to strike his tent. The very circumstances in which he thought to settle down in quietness, as though he were a mere animal, begin to fester and to trouble him, or the posture of mind which he had assumed after the last upheaval begins to lose its fitness, and the security which that posture of mind seemed to offer to him against life and death and his own thoughts about one and the other and about himself begins to

* Delivered at the Northfield General Conference, August 1921.

wear through, disclosing to him horrid depths. But whatever be the reason,—and the reason is something which is there,—in man and in life a time comes when man becomes restless, angry, frivolous, afraid, ready for anything. And the Christian church must accompany him, must hold on to him, must not give him up, must sing to him and keep singing the Lord's song in those strange lands.

To speak more definitely, ours is a living world, and the problem of one age or generation or century is never precisely the problem of any immediately preceding time.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for example, the matter on which the reformed church was called upon to protest, and, having the Bible in its hand, to protest in the name of God, was the question of the personal right of access to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. So far as preaching is concerned that was a great time; for a great time is a time when there is only one thing to say, and the one thing to say at that time was that, the entire Bible being witness, a man might speak in the bush with God. For two hundred years the reformed church lived on the happiness and rhetoric of that great idea. It is no wonder that the Bible was exalted at such a period.

We must never forget, indeed, what precisely it was for the sake of which the reformers made their great assertions concerning the written Word. I have never for myself believed that they were greatly concerned at the outset for its literal inerrancy. Perhaps they were compelled to that by the enormous prestige of the authority of the church on the other side. But I think at the outset, and in the light of Calvin and Luther's attitude, one seems to find encouragement for the view that by their exaltation of the Bible the reformers meant to compel the Roman church to choose between two absolutely exclusive alternatives. If Rome was right in her claim to the power of the keys, and that no one should have frank fellowship with God except on certain ecclesiastical terms, then the God whose decree that was alleged to be was something different from the God of the Bible. As for themselves, the God of the Bible was their God; and the Bible, which had described the behavior of God through centuries and centuries, was the foundation and support of their plea.

The next great crisis in the Christian church occurred almost in our own day, in the middle of the nineteenth century. I know very well that there is no absolutely new beginning in the history of ideas, and that any crisis has had a long and secret preparation. I know, too, that events have power to shake and disquiet the human soul simply because there is within the soul of man at every stage of his experience a capacity for uneasiness and fear. But there is no doubt that scientific inquiry—in short, the labor of the human mind,—was able about the middle of the nineteenth century to announce results in the region of knowledge, results which in substance have been verified, which had the effect in sensitive minds of letting loose in certain quarters a wave of consternation, and in other quarters a mood of disillusionment and sadness. A great deal of the best preaching in the latter half of the nineteenth century was preaching in defence of the human soul against the insinuations and innuendoes of the new knowledge. For suddenly the world had become bigger, far too big; and the human soul was in danger of feeling aghast, alone in its ridiculous little boat on such an immeasurable sea.

Into that age God poured, for our race at least, a wealth of poetry as rich as in the Elizabethan period, and poetry much more serious, more gravely concerned to safeguard the right of man to keep up his head. Clough and Arnold made us aware of the pathos of man in his new surroundings; and that very pathos was the soil on which a new faith began to spring. In Tennyson and Browning one can mark a further stage in the recovery of the human soul; until in our own day the pragmatist and the idealist alike have established the authority of instinct and intuition and reason and will, all culminating, if a man will have it so, in faith in God face to face with a universe which at one time seemed justified in overwhelming him.

In the nineteenth century, that is to say, the very function of the church was to comfort the human soul in its shudder at the magnitude of things; to declare once again that delicate and precious as the

faculty might be by which a man laid hold on God, the delicacy of the faculty was no disparagement of its authenticity and truth. That just as it is a delicate thread of tissue like the optic nerve by which alone a man is confident that what he sees about him is actually there, just so the faculty by which man is aware of God, and lies open to divine intrusions, is a faculty by all the tokens ineradicable in man and of his very essence.

The Present Day Function of the Preacher.

Now, although you who are before me and your contemporaries will always be called upon from time to time, in fidelity to the recurring moods of your own mind, to defend the human soul from discomfiture and collapse face to face with an apparently heedless universe, nevertheless, on the whole, once again it is not here that in this actual moment of time the shoe pinches. The matter in debate is in a sense something still more thoroughgoing. If in the nineteenth century good men speaking in the name of God, whether they were poets or preachers, felt that their one task was to compose the human soul shuddering as it was at the magnitude of things, in the twentieth century, in this very hour of time, the function of good men who speak in the name of God is to declare that faith in God is not a possibility merely, but an absolute and immediate necessity; not that man MAY have fellowship with God, but that he MUST have fellowship with God, or cease to be himself. In a word, the twentieth century seems to me to have as its immediate task that man must put Christ on the throne, or perish.

In my own view, one of the most elusive, as it is one of the most widespread, attitudes of men in our day towards life is the refusal to think seriously about it. We do not say with the Russians of the old régime, "Nitchevo," and shrug our shoulders, but we have by many a token of the very mood. The precise thing which is in my mind at the moment is the general acceptance of the more genial side of the Christian revelation, and the immovable and for the most part the very good-natured and even chaffing refusal to think at all of those peremptory and solemn facts of the soul, and of those disquieting and formidable possibilities, the honorable terror of which, as I hold, Christ came from God to appease.

Take any great doctrine of the Christian faith: take the doctrine of forgiveness. For a long time now, doing what we honestly supposed was our very business, we have been declaring the love of God towards man in the forgiveness of sins. But we have allowed ourselves to be misunderstood as meaning that forgiveness is absolutely free and unconditional. We have taken deep words of Scripture out of their context, and have announced to the world the reckless compassion of God. Well, of course, WE understand what we mean, and we have in our minds the qualifying facts and principles, and that outcome of personal consecration without which surely God's forgiveness is not ratified in any human soul. But those who hear us casually, or those who hear the rumor of these things from the pavement, simply take what they want and leave the rest. "God forgives our sins: good! Why, that may mean that God does not think so seriously about our sins! In fact, it may mean that there is nothing in sin; that a man is a man,"—meaning, as one always does when one says that, that he is not. And so our very announcement of the love of God in this matter of the forgiveness of sin has had the effect over whole tracts of human society of removing from men's minds their own instinctive uneasiness on moral matters. The world would seem to have taken from the Christian gospel of forgiveness what the Judaizers declared the world of their day, and the church too, had taken, and what St. James declared the world and the church were at least apt to take from St. Paul's exposition of the gospel. In a slack and jaunty way they have taken up the position that God does not take sin seriously. And so, unless we do something and that immediately to put the world and the church right on that matter, we shall find that our very keenness to announce the forgiveness of God is ministering to moral indolence and hardness of heart. We shall be helping men to do that most disastrous thing, to lose dishonorably their own moral uneasiness, and to turn the very edge of the sword of the Spirit.

Now, how are we to get back the truth about even such a doctrine as that? For I take it that it is the very nature of truth that it hurts you until you yield to it; it is certainly the very nature of truth to make a demand upon you, and at a certain stage any demand is inconvenient. For on any hypothesis, what is a sin? It is a failure. It is an infringement of some supposed law and order of things; and if we have been guilty of it we have been guilty of something of such a kind that if there were no beneficent influences at work on the other side, our solitary act would ruin the world.

Well, if a man has done a thing like that, it is nothing to be proud of, but a thing to be ashamed of, that he has forgotten about it. But the fact is that this saying about men today not worrying about their sins is not true. It may be true that an enormous number of men are not worrying about their sins, but then an enormous number of men are not worrying about anything, and so we have this present horrid and nasty world. For things are what they are, and the consequences will be what they will be, whether men are worrying about them or not. A great many people, for example, are not worrying about their debts; but if they are not worrying some other body has got to do the worrying, for the worrying has to be endured in a world that will misbehave.

Even if it were true that men are not worrying about their sins, there would be all the graver reason surely for serious men worrying about their own sins and other people's sins. Christ died for our sins. The sin of man, that is to say, worried our Lord to death.

And that precisely is what we see happening beneath the surface and in all far-seeing and priestly minds in our day, in spite of all that we may say against the present intellectual frivolity. During the last thirty or forty years the great literature of the world,—and you must judge man in any age and all the time not by his poorest behavior, but by his loftiest,—the great literature of our time has been concerned with nothing else than this problem of the forgiveness of sins. And God, I will believe, has so ordered things in order that we who are the exponents of his truth may have guidance given to us as to how to recover in the minds of men the poignant, tragic sense of our failure and its fruits. For it may very well be that in order to bring this whole matter home to the souls of men we must adopt the phraseology which they understand, and meet them on a level which they acknowledge to be just.

When I say that the great literature of the world of the last forty years has been engaged with almost nothing else than the problem of sin and how to deal with it, I am thinking, of course, of the supreme literature of the soul in our day or in any day, the literature of Russia.

Job stated the question in the terms, "How can a man be just before God?" How, that is to say, can God forgive sin? How is forgiveness possible even to God? If this world is moral, how can God deal with a thing so that it will be as though it had not been?

Now it must never be that we ministers of Christ are found to be dealing in any age with life on a more shallow level than is occupied by the grave literature of man. It will be a shameful thing if from behind the communion table we are talking about trivial or temporary things when the Spirit of God is agitating men outside the church to those lonely and awful depths. By all means it must be brought home to the minds of our hearers in these days that forgiveness of sins is something which is not possible and is not accomplished unless as the consequence of an agony in man and of an agony of God.

The Danger of Familiarity.

I have said more than once in what has immediately gone before that we preachers have encouraged people, both in the church and outside the church, to adopt this careless view of one great doctrine of Christianity. We have put forgiveness at the wrong place. Forgiveness is God's response to a previous sincerity of the soul. In other ways we have contributed to this careless, cold, and unfeeling attitude on a doctrine which, truly perceived, might once again let loose the spirit of adoration in the Christian church. The one way by which we have evacuated this great doctrine of its blood and tears is by the very tone of familiarity and ease with which we even pronounce the words. We speak of these deep things

too easily; and they are things—these deep things,—of such a kind that when we speak of them easily it means that we do not know at the moment what we are speaking about. I have heard a man use the words, "Christ died for me," with a chatty, jaunty air which was a subtle form of blasphemy. It was obvious to any understanding man that at the moment he did not know what he was speaking about.

"My sin is ever before me" said the psalmist, and so must we say one by one, not that I may be morbid over it, still less that I may seem to gloat over it in the hearing of others, as though thereby I were doing God honor or were flattering myself. "My sin is ever before me" in order that I may have ever before me the great mystery, the great faith, which is my only ground of self-respect and hearty moral action, that, thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, forgiveness is not impossible!

It is a principal and steady support of all of my own thinking about life that every great emotion is rooted in its own opposite; that the mountain which lifts itself up to the sun has an equal mass beneath the surface and at the roots of things. And it is the terrible penalty which we pay even for a fine experience that unless we take care we may lose the sense of its fineness. Who are they who can appreciate freedom and speak of it lyrically, but those who in fact or in imagination have felt the bitterness of bondage? And they only, it may be, are competent to deliver that great message of forgiveness who do not permit themselves to forget the pit and the miry clay. It is this that makes each ministry a life of substitution; and there is no ministry without this priestly basis. "I protest," said Paul, "that we die daily, nevertheless you live." And what he means is surely something very simple, but something which is of the very essence of our calling, separating that calling from every other in the world.

Francis Thompson,—God's gift of poetry to the hard-bestead preachers of our day,—Francis Thompson in a couplet offers a prayer which day by day a good man in the ministry would do well to make his own. Thompson prays

> That my tone be
> Fresh with dewy pain alway.

Let me live near to my own deepest self, to that self of mine which touches so far as man may touch the very life of God! Let me remember my own failings and necessities, and my tendency to despair! Let my soul sink down into these most baptismal waters, until, having touched reality, which is for us the breast of God, I rise again dripping with happiness and power!

Robert Louis Stevenson prays somewhere that if God ever catches him becoming casual and cocksure and futile he might stab his soul into reality and happiness by some brusque interruption.

I do not know a service which at this moment is so urgently needed within the church, which is our first field, and out in the world which we are here to affect through the church, as the disturbance and overthrow of that crust of familiarity and thoughtlessness under which the great truths concerning God and the soul of man, with which it is our very function to comfort the mind of man, lie at this moment almost dead. It is the very function of philosophy not to compose and confirm man in those final attitudes towards life into which he is always drifting, but to upset his superficial confidence, and to disturb him in certain postures of the soul which, even if they were in the first instances spiritual achievements, have now become familiar to him, and half-sensual satisfactions. And we have the strong saying which we must not seek to evade, "I will overturn and overturn and overturn until he come whose right it is,"—which saying seems to involve that it is the function of our religion to disturb man in every condition and posture of the soul in which, having fled thither for refuge, and found a temporary security, he proposes to take up his permanent abode,—forgetting that because he is what he is, and that by God's ordinance, man is a dweller in tents, that is to say, he must move on.

> With me, belief means
> Perpetual unbelief kept quiet,
> Like the snake 'neath Michael's foot,
> Who stands calm just because he feels
> It writhe.

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF ACTS*—III.

Rev. Charles E. Jefferson, D. D.

FOES AND OBSTACLES.

The Christian church is not on a picnic, but on a campaign. No better metaphor for the Christian can be found than that of the soldier. Jesus said to the twelve when he sent them out, "I send you forth as lambs among wolves." No animal is so helpless as a lamb, nor is there a more ferocious animal than a wolf. Every one of the twelve grasped the significance of Jesus' words. "I am not come to send peace but a sword." That means, Never dream that you can establish my principles in society in the midst of tranquillity. Many are to be the struggles and controversies. The church is a militant church, a church which fights every foot of the way. Look at a few of the foes.

1. Ignorance.

The church faced it at the very start. On the day of Pentecost the Christians were accused of being drunk. How did Peter meet this accusation? He met it not with anger, but with good humor. He said, "It is too early in the day to be drunk." To meet ignorance we must not snap but explain, not denounce but shed light.

The ignorant are with us always. During the war it was discovered that a large proportion of the men in the British and American armies were frightfully ignorant of the religion of Jesus Christ. We can meet this situation only by more and better teaching.

2. Superstition.

What is it? It is irrational belief. It existed in the time of the early church, and it is with us today. Simon the sorcerer was a victim of superstition, and so were the people who followed him. The people of Lystra were superstitious. Because Barnabas was big they called him Jupiter, and because Paul was small and did most of the speaking he was called Mercury.

Today many people are believing all sorts of false things. People do like to be humbugged, as Barnum said. Thousands are blown about by every wind of superstitious teaching. We must get rid of it in order that the truth of Jesus may prevail.

3. Fear.

The Sanhedrin opposed the apostles because it was afraid of them,—it did not know where this new teaching might end, and so they arrested Peter and John, and threatened them. But the apostles could not be silenced. When later on the Roman government persecuted the Christians it was because the Roman officials were afraid of the doctrine of the kingship of Jesus.

4. Bigotry.

From the beginning up to the present time the church has had to contend with this. It was the bigotry of the Jewish church which gave the apostles most trouble. Luke takes pains to tell us that in the earlier years the church was protected from Jewish fanaticism by the Roman government. Paul was protected by Roman soldiers on his journey to Cæsarea. The opposition of Rome came later.

5. Conceit.

It was conceit which drove Paul out of Athens. The highbrows of that city knew enough, and they were unwilling to be taught by a traveling preacher. They would not pay attention to what he was saying, and when he spoke of Jesus and the resurrection they supposed that Jesus was the name of a god and resurrection the name of a goddess.

Jesus made humility the foundation virtue. Unless we are humble we cannot learn. If we are intellectually proud we shut ourselves out from the counsels of God. However, we should never despair even when moving in the region of highbrows. Chapter 17, verse 34, tells us that there were converts even in Athens, a man named Dionysius and a woman named Damaris. Even Paul himself was a highbrow before his conversion. Let us never give up hope of converting even the intellectually favored!

6. Greed, vested interests.

The church very soon stirred up the antagonism of certain men because it cut down their profits. Paul at Philippi was put in jail because he took away the profit

* Delivered at the Northfield Women's Foreign Missionary Summer School, July 1921.

of some men who were using an unfortunate girl in their business. Demetrius in chapter 19 cried out against Paul because Paul was ruining his business. Demetrius is interesting because he is yet living; I am sure you can find him in your own town. The man was a silversmith, and made silver shrines for Diana which brought him no small gain. In our day the men who cry out against blue laws are nearly all brothers of Demetrius.

I do not see how the Christian church can ever be popular in many quarters, because it must of necessity trample on vested interests.

7. Hypocrisy.

Of the seven devils mentioned, this last is the worst of them all. The punishment that was inflicted upon Ananias and Sapphira was the most awe-inspiring and the swiftest of any that Luke makes record of. This sin of hypocrisy eats out the very heart of the church of God. The word hypocrite is inexpressibly odious. Why has it become so ugly? Because Jesus breathed upon it the hot breath of his condemnation.

Problems.

What problems did they grapple with? Problems met them at the start; the church today has many problems. City ministers think that their problems are more difficult than those of the country, and ministers in the rural districts think that if they were in the city their load would be lightened. Let us not cry over our problems: they do us good. It is the problems that make life interesting.

The first problem of the apostolic church was, What is the Christian message? What is the heart of it?

Peter answered it on the day of Pentecost. On Pentecost he used the key and opened the door, and received into the church all who repented and were willing to be baptized into the name of Jesus. Paul answered the same question when he said to the Philippian jailer, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. To the Romans he wrote, Confess with your mouth and believe in your heart. No doubt this was the essential thing. Jesus is the Messiah,—that was the message to the Jew; and Jesus is Lord,—that was the message to the Gentile.

A second problem was, What is the field?

At first they did not clearly see. "Go to the ends of the earth," said Jesus, but they did not understand that. Peter had to receive special aid from heaven before he was willing to go to the Roman Cornelius. It was not till persecution drove the Christians out of Jerusalem that they began to preach in Samaria and Cyprus and Syria. At first they spoke only to Jews, but in Antioch they did an unprecedented thing,—they spoke to Greeks, they offered the gospel to Gentiles. Today we all see that the field is the world.

A third problem was, How can Jews and Gentiles be brought together in the same church?

This is one of the most baffling problems. How can we induce men of different races and traditions to live harmoniously together? That is a problem which is always with us.

A fourth problem is this: How are we to harmonize the radicals and the conservatives in the church?

That problem also is still with us. We cannot get on without radicals, and we cannot get on without conservatives, and it is difficult for them to get on together. The radical is inclined to be impatient and sarcastic, and the conservative is inclined to be grumpy and suspicious. Many churches today are vexed and torn by the conflict between them. Let us remember Paul's exhortation, "Hold the truth in love." Don't jump with both feet on a conservative, be patient! Don't throw stones at the radical! His master is Christ, and to his own Master let him answer for his belief.

A fifth problem was this: How can the efficiency of the church be increased?

There was work in the Jerusalem church which was being neglected. The apostles met the problem by calling in a new set of workers. It was not fitting that the apostles should neglect the work of preachers in order to feed poor widows, but the work had to be done, and other men were appointed to do it. Many preachers today would preach better if they did not try to do so many different things. Many a church would be more efficient in extending the kingdom of God if the people would allow their pastor to do the specific task to which he has been called.

Lessons for Us.

Because of the great changes the world has undergone it might seem as if there is little that we can learn from these men who lived nineteen hundred years ago. Ours is a world of machinery, a world of science, and a world of vast social complexities. Men in the first century were not interested in the things which most interest us. We are interested in art, science, politics, education, recreation. These are five great fields in which we all revel, but the men in the Acts were not interested in these things. Their interests were different from ours. Can we, then, learn nothing from them? We can learn much. The human heart in its basal appetites and passions has never changed. The same God is working today as then. Down to the end of time the book of the Acts will have valuable lessons to teach us.

1. One great lesson is the wonderful power of God.

It is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God that the church conquers. Think of the poverty of the early church! It is true that money counts for much, but it is not the one thing essential. Moreover, they had no learning. Paul was the only college man among them, the others were unlettered peasants. They had no social prestige, they had no political influence. Paul writing to the Corinthians says, "Not many wise are called," "wise" meaning "educated"; "not many mighty," "mighty" meaning "influential"; "not many noble," noble in the sense of belonging to higher families. It seems that God took delight in using social nobodies to do his work in order that the world might see that the church was not a creation of the earth, but drew its strength from heaven.

2. These men teach us to fight with boldness.

The trouble with many of us is that we are too timorous. Even Paul asked Christians to pray for him that he might open his mouth boldly. Many of us are in need of a similar prayer. If Christians had been brave enough to stamp on the pagan adage, In time of peace prepare for war, there might never have been the greatest and most horrible of all wars.

3. These men teach us how to be joyous.

The book of Acts is full of gladness. It is a book of suffering and death, and yet it leaves us with a song in the heart. When Stephen dies his face shines, and he offers a prayer which is as sweet as heaven. When Paul and Silas are cast into prison they both sing. The prisoners heard them, and the world has been listening to them ever since. The book of the Acts helps us to enter into the joy of our Lord.

THE LAW OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

Rev. F. B. Meyer, D. D.

In the early part of my life I was always seeking for fellowship with our Lord, but now I find that if I am right with the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit gives me all of Christ I want. There are many ways by which people want to get at a personal contact with Christ, and they do it by one method and another; but I am absolutely certain by my own experience, whatever it goes for, that if you want to have Jesus Christ you have him only in proportion as you live in touch with the Holy Spirit, because the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ.

Years ago at Keswick I had been seeking an emotional experience of Christ, and a number of us had a great argument about it. Finally we adjourned to a place which to us is like Round Top to you, overlooking Lake Derwentwater. There we met together, a number of clergymen and myself, and we were discussing how best to know Christ. And there was a young manufacturer,—I think it was Oldham, who has since done such mighty service for missionary work; he was then in business,—and he said:

"You men have been talking a lot. I want to give you my experience. I am a young manufacturer. I have a large establishment in Glasgow, and I am in and out all the time, looking after our work; but if ever I lose the sense of the presence of

* From an address at the Northfield General Conference, August 1921.

Christ in my life I leave the factory and go into my counting house, lock the door, kneel down and say, 'Holy Spirit, what have I done to grieve thee, that thou hast withdrawn thy light from the face of Christ?' And I find an ungrieved Spirit makes a revealed Christ."

We broke up, feeling that was the final word, and I have gone on that for many a long year. If my experience goes for anything it endorses that.

When the Spirit of God comes to a church or to an individual, he always obeys law. A great key verse to that is Romans 8. 2, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Now people mistake a miracle. They say it is the suspension of law. It is no such thing. A miracle is the introducing of a higher law that neutralizes and overpowers the lower law, and so there is no interruption of law in the world. Everything is by law, and there is no interruption of law in the spiritual world, in the church, in you.

I was coming over last week from my country, and I watched the gulls. How does a gull fly? Is a gull lighter than air? Does a gull float like a balloon? Certainly not. The gull is so heavy that if shot it would fall at once into the water. Why? Because of the law of gravitation, the pull in the earth that pulls everything down. Why did not the living gull fall down then? Because the gull acted like a kite. When your boy lets go a kite, it is not that the kite is lighter than the air, but the pull of the string against the pressure of the wind, the conjunction of these two, enables the kite to rise against the wind. A bird flies like that, only instead of having string it has the pull of gravitation, and the pull of gravitation down is counteracted by the flapping of its wings; and the law of the spirit of the gull, the law of the spirit of life which is in the gull, makes the gull free from the law of gravitation, which otherwise would pull it down. Do you see that?

And if you and I are going to live in the Spirit, it is not that we are not going to feel the pull of temptation all the time. The law of the Holy Spirit in your heart and mine does not make temptation needless or impossible, but it makes us gather victory and accessions of spiritual power out of temptation.

The law of the spirit of life excludes emotion as a condition, though it leaves it as a consequence. Emotion is not a condition of the Holy Spirit, but when you have the Holy Spirit you have joy, the emotion comes after the reception. Do get out of the way of going about the world nursing yourself and saying, "Am I happy?" Always it should be, "Am I right?" for if I am right I shall be happy.

The soul lives between two worlds, and it has two media or organs of communication. By the spirit it is in communication with the unseen, eternal world, where God, who is spirit, dwells; and by the body it is in contact with this earth, with materialism. Every soul born into the world has to decide whether it is going to climb up into union and affinity with the spiritual world through the staircase of the Spirit, or whether it is going to descend into contact with the material world and allow the material world to dominate it. The material world can only dominate you through your body, your sensibilities, as you yield to it. There are a great many people in our churches, well-meaning people,—for the soul includes, I think, the conscience,—moral people, who are constantly by the body being brought into contact with materialism. That is why they want dances and whist drives and things of that sort. Very good people in themselves, moral people, but they yield, they go downward all the time, and they are caught and held by the constant round of amusements and outward interest. On the other hand, the whole work of religion is to tie up the soul through the Spirit with the spirit realm.

The veteran missionary, Dr. Wm. L. Hascall, who for many years labored in Burma, is engaged upon a **Concordance of the New Testament in Burmese.** The work, which was begun some time ago, is nearing completion. The passion of those who have given their lives for missionary work continues even when impaired health does not permit active service upon the field. Dr. Hascall's home in America is at Riverside, Rhode Island.

THE MUKTI MISSION OF PUNDITA RAMABAI.

Miss Clementina Butler.

During Ramabai's first visit to the United States she received at Northfield a most cordial welcome, and from that time to this, gifts have come from friends who attend the annual conferences and also from the readers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK, which have been a very substantial aid to this wonderful woman in the administration of her great mission.

Mukti Mission (she calls it Salvation,) has indeed proven to be the place of salvation for literally thousands of young women and girls. The average family of nearly fifteen hundred girls is supported by Ramabai, who stands at the head of her task with no pledged support or settled income save about $1000 a year, the rest coming in answer to appeals and from friends who know of the mission.

This indigenous work, unique in India in the fact of its being originated and carried on by a woman, and a woman handicapped by widowhood,—a position which in that land places fetters upon the souls of millions of women,—is of deep interest to missionary observers. India, and indeed all lands, must be saved by its own people, and not by the foreign missionary, who is needed undoubtedly to commence the work, but the completion of the task must be in the hands of the sons and daughters of the soil. Therefore the continued success of Ramabai during these past thirty-one years is a joy to those who work for the extension of the Master's kingdom. Naturally gifted with a wonderful mind, her consecration and the inspiration of her great objective have made of this little Indian woman a beautiful lady.

Not only does she carry on school work for the class for whom her sympathy was first aroused, the child widows, but she has extended this to include work for deserted wives and widows, and also famine children, of whom she gathered large numbers during the two awful periods of stress

which have come to India, and for whose entire life she has thus become responsible.

Not only the teaching of books but industrial work is a large feature in her social plan. The clack of the loom is heard constantly, one set of girls weaving in the morning, another in the afternoon, alternating with school hours. The printing office, where the various processes are learned, sends out most creditable work, and indeed Ramabai has attempted a monumental task, which is, to translate herself the Holy Scriptures into the language of the common people of Mahartai tongue.

She sits in true Indian fashion, because her idea has been, in spite of her two visits to America, to keep her school in all fashions truly Indian, to make it Christian without making it foreign to the customs of her people; therefore she who has been the guest in many homes of wealth and culture in this country sits on the floor for her writing and for her simple meals, which are eaten without the cutlery which we demand, but which is yet impossible for the humble masses of the great empire. She sits on the floor surrounded by students, to each of whom she has given a specialty. One has studied Hebrew, another Greek, and so on, and together they work day after day in the translation of the book which above all other things Ramabai feels that India needs for its release from superstition and false faith, and for its development as a nation.

On her first visit to America Ramabai was accompanied by her daughter, a gentle, sweet faced girl of ten, who gave promise of being as fine a student as her gifted mother. A course of study in the United States was followed by work for her degree at Bombay University, and Manoramabai became her mother's chief helper and support, presiding over the Sharada Sadan, meeting visitors from afar, governing the large family within the walls, and advising the little village or family which has grown up outside the walls. Mano indeed seemed to be the one who would follow Ramabai as the head of this great mission. However, in July she was called to higher service.

What Ramabai will do without this companion and helper we cannot imagine, but those who know how heavy has been the burden in these years of war and famine of providing food for her family will at least want to see that the anxiety for daily bread is not added to her loneliness.

Mr. E. C. Linn, 1388 Beacon Street, Brookline, Mass., is the treasurer of the American Ramabai Association, and will gladly forward any gifts or give any information regarding the needs of this unique work.

HOME MISSION CONFERENCE REPORTS.

The Young Women's Mission Study Class under Miss Margaret Wilson considered the subject of a decision for life-service as it is discussed in Mr. Eastman's study book, "Playing Square with Tomorrow."

The present day attitude of our youth and its relation to the world need introduced the subject of America's own fitness to meet world needs as a "people of destiny." The young people of today stand at a cross-roads of self and service, with a strong tendency to drift in the way of the crowd instead of courageously pledging themselves to unselfish service. And if they do so pledge themselves they have the further danger of overlooking the small duty, of forgetting that great structures are built up on minute molecules, and that service must begin in the heart, the home, the home community and the homeland, before America can save the world. America's diverse elements, presenting a very different problem now from 25 years ago, must be knit together with Christian coöperation, and this must begin with the substitution of friendliness in every girl's mind for the prejudice which lurks there for one racial element or another.

A daily increasing number gathered in the Northfield Auditorium for the study of the senior text book for the current year, of which Miss E. B. Vermilye was the leader. This book is entitled, "From Survey to Service." The timeliness of

this book cannot be questioned in present day conditions of unrest and transition, for the author has tried honestly and conscientiously to face the facts concerning the duty and apparent failures of the Christian church, and strives to find a solution and remedy for problems and conditions. That he feels the church has lost the vision of service as the reason for its being is evident throughout the book,—he everywhere emphasizes that the meaning and purpose of the church is as a service agency; that the challenge of its task is to put the church within the reach of all. He clearly presents and explains the obstacles in the path, the failures of the past and the hopeful elements for the future.

The general theme of the book is America's struggle to remain American and Christian,—which involves home missions and the very existence of the Christian church. The aim of the book is to make it clear that religious diagnosis is possible to indicate causes of present ills, and to generate purpose and power for amendment. First he deals with the church as a service agency. The church is vitally needed, but its business is to succeed, and to serve the world and America. Such service is now unequal and inadequate; Mr. Douglas' concern is as to how it can be improved, and his argument and suggestions are toward that end. He emphasizes the immense value of the surveys instituted and carried forward by the Interchurch Movement, as helps to the true understanding of conditions and problems. He suggests some quite new methods, such as the correspondence church, and the zone and sector plan, for the solution of problems caused by distance. His goal is to have the entire people adequately served by religious agencies, and to that end he calls on the church to place enough men and institutions in the field to occupy the whole area of the nation with religious forces, as the need is revealed through surveys, and to stimulate these forces to new understanding, new vision, and more effective effort. The times call for a new era of Christian intelligence, resolute of demonstrable truth, with open-minded facing of all facts about the church and ourselves as Christians, in the light of all available investigations.

The author next follows native and foreign workers through all conditions and phases of their work, and marks the problems caused by distance, transience, difference, and prejudice. He notes how all these obstacles merge into and involve each other, and how seriously the church, and its agent home missions, are handicapped by each and all.

Finally he deals with "Home Missions and the World of Work." It is the climax of the book, for "physical creatures need bread, clothing, and shelter as well as sustenance for the soul." Mr. Douglas follows the economic struggle as the core of the problem through all its phases for the worker and the community, and presents as the aim and objective of home missions a better church with a consequent release of spiritual life; a fresh access of spiritual power, and a scientific utilization of the spiritual resources dormant in the Christian world.

Those who studied the book at Northfield expressed new desire for service, and a renewed consecration for the Master's work. The volume certainly has great value in this troublous time, when America's problems and needs are pressing on every thinking mind and earnest heart. It blazes the way to better comprehension of the problems and needs, and to more effective ways of conquering them. The business of the church is to incarnate, for this nation and the world, the serving, saving, conquering Christ, and the church is made up of its members!

Called to Serve.

Mrs. Elizabeth A. Brubaker.

We have been told that we are living in the greatest period in the world's history, a period unequaled in achievements of every kind, and perhaps we have congratulated ourselves as we have thought of our unexcelled advantages, the education we have received and the salary we expect to command. I am not a pessimist, I should not like to be known as one. I am an optimist and a "peptimist." Yet you will agree with me that there is another side to this picture, the side which shows us the misery and squalor, the poverty and wretchedness of life.

Oh the horror of the problems which confront us; the poor of our slums, the

overcrowded foreign districts of our great cities, the people of the mountains shut away from the rest of us, the negro problem, the Oriental problem bringing the increasing temples on the western coast and representing sixty-seven different non-Christian religions, the worshipers of which parade the streets of the great cities bearing their gods before them in true heathen fashion! Then there is the American heathen religion, Mormonism, the problem of capital and labor, the problem of corrupt politics, and the great international problems.

Then, too, we have but to walk up and down the streets of our cities to realize that this is a blood-bought country of ours. Oh the pathos of caring for these men, some without limbs, and some blind! Oh the sacrifices they have made!

Certainly every able-bodied man and woman must give a reason for being alive today. You must make yourself effective in the story of the world. You must justify your right to live as God expects you to live and inherit this day. No day has been so difficult as this one is, but education and religion have not been brought into the world to make life easy. Jesus Christ did not come to make life easy. He came to make men strong that they might do the difficult things. No day is so difficult as this one. And the challenge rings out to the young and the brave, to the middle aged and the timid. Everywhere mankind is crying, "We would see Jesus! We would see Jesus! Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us!" And they will accept nothing less than Jesus, nothing less than the Father, for truly there is no substitute.

The greatest thing that you can do in this world is to bring people into the kingdom of God. The call to consecrated effort is to each one of us, not to some particular group whom we set apart and expect to do the work we ourselves should do. The call is out, and the tremendous significance of the fact is that the real red-blooded men and women are not looking for ease but for strength to live a right life. What are you looking forward to? A life of ease? A large salary? Are you interested primarily in how much you will get? Let me tell you that it makes little difference how much you get. No one will remember that, and no one will care or ask about it. When we study the great men of history do we emphasize what they got? What did Washington get? What did Lincoln get? It is not what they got which counts, but what they gave, what they did. It is not a question of what we get, but what we do.

Perhaps you have decided to do missionary work, perhaps you realize that you were saved to serve, and you want to know the next step. One word will answer that,—"preparation." Education of the highest type is necessary in the business world, and it is of greater importance in the religious world, even as the spiritual is greater than the material. When you have finished high school it is necessary that you go to some other school for special work. As the representative of the Lucy Webb Hayes National Training School I want to recommend this school to you and give you an idea of the work done there. Under the direction of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church this school trains directors of religious education, missionaries, deaconesses, social service workers, pastor's assistants, domestic science teachers, kindergarten teachers, and nurses. For the training of our nurses we have a hospital of one hundred and seventy-five beds, where there are nearly two hundred practising physicians. Our Bible department is supported by the leading Methodist ministers of the city of Washington, and a number of them instruct our students. Three years are required to complete the course, and the work is such that our students receive college credit for it. Besides the regular studies the students do a great deal of practical work along social service lines. They serve in fifteen different churches, work in Bruen Community House, and in two community churches, do Americanization work, and volunteer work with the Associated Charities, and respond to numerous other calls. Our students enjoy the advantage of a Christian school with a splendid spiritual atmosphere in our national capital.

It means much to be called into the work of the kingdom of God, and only by answering this call and allowing God to lead you will you find the place of highest and deepest joy.

SERMONIC TYPES.*

Rev. Harris E. Kirk, D. D.

Socrates used to describe himself as a man midwife: his business was to look after minds in labor. Some appear dull at first, but after his skilful questioning they make astonishing progress. By quickening the subconscious possibilities of the mind, what is latent in it becomes fully disclosed.

This is an apt description of the function of the preacher. It is not enough that he should convey the truth of God to men, but he must also stimulate the mind, arouse its fructifying powers, awaken the depths of life, and call forth from the "dormitory of the soul" latent beliefs, desires and aspirations. The preacher must apply truth to human needs, and when this is done it becomes experience. His duty is not only to develop experience, but to interpret it; to make dark things clear, to open blind eyes and teach the stammering tongue to speak plainly, for, as F. S. Oliver has remarked, "the fabric of a vision that worketh great marvels is the experience of common men," or, as Paul puts it, "whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

This means that the personality of the preacher is more important than any fixed method of sermonizing. The problem is to find out the method best adapted to individual requirements, and then to apply it to the times in which one lives. We are light-bearers, but if by using the electric torch we can give a better light we ought not to cling to the old-fashioned tallow dip. This means that the growing preacher will eventually find out the method best fitted for the expression of his talent. Still, there are certain fixed principles that must be kept in mind.

When facing sermonic preparation the preacher must have three questions in mind: Why? What? and How?

The Why of the sermon is its definite purpose, and is of course the most important. Every sermon has an object, and there are two general ways of viewing it: and these ways suggest two methods of preparation, the telescopic and the microscopic.

Telescopic and Microscopic Methods.

The telescope functions only when it is focused; each section must open into the other until clear vision is obtained. If we apply this to sermonic construction we shall discover three characteristics of the method: First, the preacher's aim will not be clear to the hearer until the sermon is finished, the conclusion or application being held in reserve. Second, interest will be sustained throughout by an orderly unfolding of successive relations of thought. Third, the movement will be towards a climax of surprise, in which the meaning of the whole becomes clear, and captures the mind by its logical precision.

This method has certain definite advantages. It will abound in clear-cut arguments, supporting the conclusion. It will be apt to convince the hearer of its reasonableness, and lend itself to the cumulative influence of oratory. Besides, the method is best fitted for the presentation of general principles and abstract truth. It is a favorite with those who can follow sustained arguments, and to whom the appeal of religion must be primarily intellectual.

The microscopic method is just the reverse of this. Even as the object is always clearly seen under the magnifying glass, so the purpose or aim of the sermon is immediately set forth. It enlists the subconscious powers of the hearer, because you take him into your confidence and he knows from the beginning where you are going. Curiosity is aroused and interest is sustained not as in the telescopic method by suspense until the end, but by increase of magnifying power, in which the same thing is seen with growing clearness and distinctness. The listener is interested because he is permitted to see the thing growing under the mind's eye. This interest is further expanded by being linked with the developing mental processes of the hearer. The effect is to materially enlarge the field of consciousness, and at the same time to concentrate interest on the conclusion, so that

* Third in a series delivered at the Northfield General Conference, August 1921.

the hearer believes that the conclusion is the result of his own reasoning processes.

The difference between the two methods is this: the telescopic is the method of the orator, instinct with the eloquence of the logician, and it produces convincing acceptance of truth. The microscopic is the method of the artist, instinct with the eloquence of the persuader. It gains power over the mind by enlisting its subconscious or mystical powers. One functions through direct appeal to the logical instinct, the other depends upon indirect stimulation, involves gradually the semi-illuminated field of the mind, and develops into mystical suggestiveness. One depends upon reason, the other upon imagination and exalted feeling. The gain of one is conviction, of the other appreciation; and both, if rightly used, will lead on to appropriation and application of truth to life and conduct.

After all is said, however, the microscopic has certain advantages over the telescopic method at the present time. The latter is best adapted to the requirements of severely logical minds, to men capable of sustained thinking. Modern congregations as a rule are not capable of this severe exercise. The mind wanders from one thing to another; like the humming bird, it tastes of all flowers with impartial appreciation, and its interest can be concentrated only through continuous stimulation. Furthermore, the microscopic method enables the wandering mind to return at will and still gain something from a sermon; for unless attention is held throughout and logical processes set up in the mind, the chances are that the effort will completely fail. Human nature resents a direct attack on its ignorance, and impatiently waits for the point in the sermon. The best way to attack a sluggish intelligence is to quicken the less obvious phases of mental life, so that the hearer feels that he, rather than the preacher, is responsible for the conclusion reached. The preacher can work no greater nor more pleasing miracle than to persuade his hearer that he is thinking the preacher's thoughts.

Let us suppose now that you set about a sermon on John 4. 25, 26, the incident of Christ and the Samaritan woman, and you propose to use the microscopic method. Your divisions would be as follows:

(1) The woman is a type of a lost world waiting for God, wherein certain inchoate beliefs about religion and longings for a better life are checked by the consciousness of her sinful condition, so that instead of leading to hopeful anticipations they develop deep self-despisings.

This at once establishes a sympathetic contact with the hearers, because most of us feel precisely this way about ourselves.

In your second division, (2), Christ found in this situation a sufficient reason for revealing himself to the woman by speaking of her sin in such a way as to deepen conviction of its enormity, yet so as to show her that he did not regard it as a final register of her possibilities. Our Lord considered the woman's longings as representative of her true self, and this led to an awakening of the soul in such a way as to develop faith and confessional action.

(3) Which suggests, as another has pointed out, the "law and limit of our influence over others," wherein if we would move people to love and understand Christ we must speak to the depths in their lives out of the depths of our own.

The same subject with a different text, John 4. 23, may be treated according to the telescopic method with the following divisions:

(1) The revelation of a great truth of religion, namely, the nature of God and the spirituality of worship. Three postulates of this truth: worship must be spiritual, in the truth, and sincere; and when these elements unite God seeketh such to worship him.

(2) The revelation of a great truth of religion to a most unlikely person. Herein the character and general reputation of the woman, taken together with her conception of herself, sufficiently show how unlikely a being she was for such a teaching.

(3) The revelation of a great truth of religion, to a most unlikely person, which met with a most surprising response, wherein forsaking her old life she became a confessed disciple, and her testimony is accepted as genuine even by the townsmen, who knew her reputation.

Another illustration, from the text 1 Corinthians 13. 12: "We know in part."

The telescopic method applied will yield the following divisions: (1) We know in part. (2) We know in part, but we know. (3) We know in part, but we know, and to know in part is to know enough. This conclusion is driven home in the end by the accumulation of ideas in the development of the sermon, and it may be immediately changed into a microscopic model by simply using the conclusion, which under the other method was reserved as a climax of surprise, as the subject, to be the first idea to fill the mind of the hearer: "To know in part is to know enough."

For our restless modern congregations I am convinced that the microscopic method is the better of the two, since it enlists the services of the imagination as well as the intelligence, and continually stimulates the hearer through persuasion rather than argument. It is, in short, direct, personal, and appealing, instead of being merely discursive and argumentative. Still, the growing preacher would do well to master both methods, and to be governed by the specific necessities of a particular occasion.

The Best Type.

The next step is the selection of the best type of sermon. Homiletical manuals usually specify three varieties: the subject sermon, in which the divisions are dictated by the subject; the textual sermon, in which the divisions are severely textual; and the expository sermon, in which the body of thought is strictly limited to the passage under review.

They all have their advantages and disadvantages. The subject sermon has the distinct advantage of unity and clarity, and it is a favorite with orderly minds; but an interesting subject often tempts the preacher away from Scripture, and leads him into unprofitable regions. Subjects based on so-called topics of the time or phrased to catch the mind of the man in the street are undesirable from any point of view. The textual sermon compels the preacher to derive his thought from Scripture; but textual preachers often use the texts as if they were distinct and logical propositions, disregarding the context, while the net result of a too rigid loyalty to this method is the substitution of pious platitudes for fresh and vigorous thought. The old style expository sermon flourished in the days when the people looked to the pulpit for instruction in Biblical teaching, but since the rise of the Sabbath school and Bible class the need for this sort of sermon has diminished. Ideally, this is the best method, but practically it will not adapt itself to the chaotic life of congregations today.

My own feeling is that the three varieties may be combined into one type, in which the advantages of subject, text, and context may all be preserved, while the disadvantages of each method may be reduced to a minimum.

I offer two illustrations of this composite method.

The text is Isaiah 28. 16: "He that believeth shall not make haste." The subject is "The Repose of a Settled Faith." The divisions dictated by the subject are: (1) The need of a settled faith; (2) The regulative authority of a settled faith; and (3) The repose given by a settled faith. The divisions are derived, however, from the context. The historic situation which gave rise to the text furnishes a fine illustration of the need of such a faith. The prophet's teaching shows how such a faith can be obtained, while his behavior in those unsettled times is an example of the repose of a settled faith. These thoughts are suggested by the subject, derived from the context, and are compacted together in the text.

Another illustration. The text is Nehemiah 6. 11: "Should such a man as I flee?" The subject is "Nehemiah's Ideals." The divisions are dictated by and bring into play the first six chapters of his book: (1) Nehemiah's ideals revealed; (2) Nehemiah's ideals tested by experience; and (3) The strength of Nehemiah's ideals derived from his religion. In this case six entire chapters are used to illustrate a thirty-minute sermon, yet the sermon itself follows its subject and is based upon its text.

The happiest people are those who try to make others happy.

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF GOD.*

Rev. Charles R. Erdman, D. D.

Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. Judges 14. 14.

This riddle reminds us of an interesting incident in the life of the renowned Hebrew hero Samson. He had fallen in love with a Philistine, much to the distress of his parents; and any parents may rightfully feel distressed when a son proposes to marry a girl who has neither respect nor sympathy for their customs, their people or their God. Samson believed that if his parents could see the young Philistine their opinion would change. A visit is arranged, and with his father and mother he makes the journey toward the home of the Philistine. As he nears the journey's end, the lighter heart and stronger limbs of the young hero carry him on ahead of his aged parents, when suddenly a young lion disputes the way. Samson with his naked hands tears him in pieces as one would rend a kid, and drags the carcass from the path, and then returns to join his parents, making no mention of his exploit.

From the viewpoint of Samson the visit was successful, for the engagement was announced; and now, after the lapse of a short time, Samson and his parents are returning to the wedding. Again he pushes on ahead, and as he reaches the place where he killed the lion he turns aside to see how his old friend is faring. He finds that the sun and the wind have dried the carcass of the lion, and that bees have used it for a hive. He takes some of the honey in his hands, rejoins his parents, but tells them nothing of his experience with the lion. During the wedding feast which follows, Samson proposes a riddle to the thirty young Philistines who are serving as his groomsmen, and to add interest he wagers a change of raiment for each of the men in case they can guess the riddle which he propounds, "Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

The days of the feast were passing, but the answer could not be found. Then the groomsmen approached the bride with the gentle suggestion that unless she tells them the answer to the riddle they will burn her and her father's house with fire. She succeeds in extorting the secret from Samson, she reports it to the groomsmen, and they return to Samson with the reply, "What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion?" Samson retorts with words which have become proverbial, "If ye had not plowed with my heifer ye would not have found out my riddle."

This riddle, however, is more than a reminder of this incident; it is an interpretation of the whole life of Samson. He was the lion, the man of ungoverned passions, of fierceness and strength, out of whom came deliverance for the people from which was to come the Deliverer of the world.

This is the rest of the story. Angered at his groomsmen, Samson goes to a neighboring city of the Philistines, kills thirty men and takes their raiment to pay his wager, and then in a frenzy of disgust goes back to his home in the land of Judah. When his anger is somewhat cooled he returns to look for his deserted bride, and learns that she has been given in marriage to the friend who had served as best man at his wedding. Samson is again enraged. He seeks revenge upon the Philistines. He catches three hundred foxes, and two by two ties them tail by tail, with a fire brand between each two, and then sends them out into the standing grain of the Philistines. The men of the land are alarmed, and learning the cause of their trouble they go up and burn with fire Samson's wife and father and their house. Now Samson is further enraged. He falls upon the Philistines with a great slaughter, and flees back to the land of Judah followed by a Philistine army. Deserted by his own countrymen, he seizes the jaw bone of an ass, kills a thousand of the enemy and puts the army to flight; and then for twenty years serves as the judge and ruler and deliverer of Israel.

* Delivered at the Northfield General Conference, August 1921.

At the close of this long period of faithful service he falls in love with Delilah, and for her sake renounces his dedication to God, consequently losing his strength, and is blinded and bound by the Philistines and carried as a prisoner to Gaza. However, as he again turns toward God in trust and in consecration he is strengthened anew, and in the hour of his death, as he overthrows the temple of Dagon, he is able to destroy a larger number of the enemy and strike a more decisive blow than at any time during his life. Even out of his sin and folly God has wrought a great deliverance, so that as the poor mangled body is buried near Eshtaol one properly might engrave on his tombstone this legend, "Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

A Law of Providence.

This riddle, however, is much more than an interpretation of the life of Samson: it is the statement of a law of providence. God is ever able to bring food out of the destroyer, to bring sweetness out of that which is bitter, to bring light out of darkness and life out of death. This he did in the experience of Joseph, and of Moses, and of David, and of Daniel, and supremely out of the death of our Lord, for at the cross the forces of darkness seemed to have won a victory that was complete, but the cross of Christ became the tree which has been sweetening all the bitter waters of the world.

One should hasten to say, however, that this principle of divine power does not explain the mystery of evil. There are some persons who seem to feel that it does. They notice how that ever and again some good has resulted from pain or loss or disaster, and therefore they conclude that all evil is good in the making, and that if it is only allowed to continue long enough it will change from a curse to a blessing. They seem to argue that because honey was found in the carcass of one lion, therefore if we follow any lion far enough it at last will be found to be full of sweetness.

There are others who attempt to solve the mystery of evil by insisting that evil and good are quite the same. They say that the only difference lies in our mental attitude: if we only think that a thing is right and pleasing and delightful, it is so, no matter how wicked or distressing or lawless it may be thought by others to be. They insist that God is good, and all is God, and God is all, and therefore it is only an "error of mortal mind" to suppose that pain or sin is real. They have seen sweetness coming out of some destroyer, and therefore they urge you to have no fear of any lion. They tell you to regard it as harmless, and if you trust it as a pet it will prove to be a delightful companion. Most of us, however, believe that it would have been difficult to convince Samson that his famous battle had resulted merely in the destruction of a beehive or a box, and the old hero would probably have required only a fraction of a minute to convince any theorist that there is a reality in pain and suffering and death.

There are others who face the problem of evil and who conclude that evil is absolutely necessary to good. They insist that there could be no appreciation of sunlight were it not for darkness, and that all the distress in the world is an absolute condition of the happiness which is enjoyed. It is as though they have seen honey taken out of some lion and therefore have concluded that were it not for dead lions there could be no honey in the world. What troubles most of us is the fact that there are better places in which to search for honey than in dead lions. Because good at times is brought out of evil we hesitate to believe that there is no other way in which good can be produced. It is a dismal doctrine that men and women must always pass through suffering and pain on the way to happiness and joy. It is perfectly true that God can bring good out of evil, but this fact does not explain the unsolved riddle, the dark enigma of human suffering and misery and death.

We should also hasten to say that this blessed law of providence whereby God does transform evil into good is no encouragement to sin. Some seem to feel that it is. They believe that men and women are made broader and wiser and more useful by sowing wild oats and seeing all sides of life. Some even declare with an air of pious wisdom that the greatest saints have once been the greatest sinners, and that those who have fallen most shame-

fully, when repentant, are of most service to others. This is a false and a fatal philosophy, but it has wide vogue in the present day. The fact is that sin always mars and contracts and weakens and deforms. One who yields to temptation will never be, either in time or eternity, quite so great, quite so useful, quite so blessed, as he otherwise might have been.

This truth is embodied in these popular lines:

I walked through the woodland meadows,
Where sweet the thrushes sing,
And found in a bed of mosses
A bird with a broken wing.
I healed its wound, and each morning
It sang its old sweet strain;
But the bird with the broken pinion
Never soared as high again.

I found a young life broken
By sin's seductive art,
And touched with a Christian pity
I took him to my heart.
He lived with a noble purpose,
And struggled not in vain,
But the life that sin had stricken
Never soared as high again.

But the bird with the broken pinion
Kept another from the snare,
And the life that sin had stricken
Raised another from despair.
Each ill has its compensation;
There is healing for every pain;
But the bird with a broken pinion
Never soars as high again.

These lines found their way into a penitentiary where a prisoner in the darkness and partly because of his suffering had found new life through faith in Christ: and he wrote another stanza which ran something like this:

But the soul that sin hath stricken
With all its guilt and stain,
By Jesus' grace and merit
Can soar as high again.

Thus, in the last place, we should emphasize the truth that while the fact that God can bring good out of evil does not explain the mystery of suffering nor encourage us to sin, it does lead us to place our whole trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, who can take the sin and the evil and the pain and make them instruments of his glory in the perfecting of character and in the salvation of immortal souls.

That is the real story of Samson. It is not true that Samson was a great deliverer because he was a great sinner, but he was a great deliverer when and because the Spirit of God came upon him. As we read the story we find again and again this is given as the secret of his life. We are not to suppose, as some seem to imagine, that Samson performed his feats of strength because of the size of his body or because of his long black hair. The source of his strength was a secret: it was due to his consecration to God. Otherwise the Philistines need not to have gone to Delilah with the promise that each one would give her eleven hundred pieces of silver if she could discover the source of his power. She knew it was a secret, and when at last the secret was disclosed it proved to be in the fact that his long hair was but the badge of his devotion, the seal of his consecration, and when he turned from God Samson became as weak as any other man. When, however, his consecration was renewed, his strength returned, and he again became the great deliverer of Israel.

Such has ever been the secret of strength. The source of usefulness, the condition of power, is absolute dependence upon Christ and devotion to his service. If we are true to him, life will still have its riddles, but it cannot be a tragedy. It will still be full of mysteries, but some day we shall understand, "for now we see in a mirror darkly (literally, in a riddle), but then face to face." And further, as Paul declares, "we know that to them that love God all things work together for good."

The Human Element in the Making of a Christian.

Miss Lillian Picken.

Miss Condé's book with the above title (Scribner's, $1.25) is the most stimulating book in personal work that I have found. She presents the incentives and problems of such work in a sane, practical way, and gives a searching Bible study at the close of each chapter which drives one back to first sources in one's thinking. Every Christian should study this book. It is also admirably adapted for group study and has proved effective in the case of young Christians as well as older.

I know of no greater challenge to the vitality of our Christian experience than the study Miss Condé presents to us here.

THE INCARNATION.*

The Rt. Rev. Charles H. Brent.

Fellow students, my topic this morning is the greatest fact in time. Not only does it touch the life of those who are on the threshold of their vocation, but the little child needs to grasp it, and in turn to be grasped by it, and as life moves on and evening comes old age can find peace and rest in it alone.

I am to speak to you on the incarnation of the Son of God, how the Son of God took human flesh upon him that he might be the Son of man among the sons of men. The incarnation, to quote the stately and glorious language seasoned by ages, is the coming in the flesh of the wonderful Lord Jesus Christ, "the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man."

These fair words of affirmation were the passionate repudiation centuries ago of a subtle negation of the incarnation, and the astounding thing is that in that age of controversy there should have arisen this mountain of affirmation. In the whole of this statement there is but a single negative, and that negative is itself supposed to state that there was a controversy, but not for that chiefly. The negative is there in order to reinforce an affirmation,—"begotten, not made."

In the consideration of the incarnation of the Son of God I need but a single premise, and that is that God is love. When you say God is love, and his innermost character is thus declared, the incarnation becomes a sublime necessity of God's being. The moment God created man in his own image the incarnation was a necessity, and it was out of the fulness of the abundance of his life, because he was the Father prior to man's creation, that he created man. The old mystics used to say, in what at first sight seems to be exaggerated language,—but really is not,—that God needs man.

What is the characteristic of love? The characteristic of love that makes it different from any other virtue or attribute is that it insists upon being identified with the beloved. Hence I say that if God is love, and if out of the fulness of his love he created man in his own image, the incarnation was a necessity of his being. There came something into the life of man by the action of man's will that on first sight would seem to thwart the purpose of God. There was that falling away from singleness of aim, there was that disobedience of the will which we call sin, but the effect of man's sin upon God was only to intensify his love, and so his purpose,—though it checked his progress.

The moment is ripe when the Son of God can get a foothold upon earth. Ah, what a slender foothold it is, though! He can come, but there is no room for him in the inn, and it is to the stable that he must go as a baby. You know the story as it comes still fresh with the mother's breath in St. Luke's Gospel, the story as it is contained in the philosophic language of St. John, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

He entered into the world not through a palace but through a stable, though the poverty he chose is not the kind of poverty we see in the slums of New York and London, poverty caused by the selfishness and greed of mankind in this unchristian order in which we live. Not that kind of poverty, but the poverty that was wholesome and clean and fine, poverty full of difficulties that challenged and not difficulties that ground humanity out of him.

This Jesus, through the eternal Spirit, is with us now. His human experience is with him as an eternal fact of his life. There is nothing that you go through that does not cause his heart to tremble in sympathy with you. What is your relation to the eternal Son of God,—infinite love, exquisite compassion, omnipotent strength?

* From an address at Northfield.

THE FULNESS OF THE TIME.*

Prof. J. Hope Moulton.

My object this morning is to illustrate from certain language conditions of the first centuries B. C. and A. D. how it was just the one time in all human history when the birth at Bethlehem could best take place, how Jesus came into the world just exactly when everything was made ready for him.

Greek was the language of a little country most uniquely dowered, a little country into which there was more intellectuality packed than into any other, large or small, in all the world's history before or since. When we speak of Greece, however, we have to cut down our definition still further, for even in Greece most parts were ordinary, but there was an extraordinary strain of genius concentrated in the people of Athens. Though the writers of Greece outside Attica produced some supreme literature, such as Homer and Pindar and Herodotus, the greatest and most varied literary, artistic and scientific output has to be credited to that one town.

Now when we look at the Greek of five hundred years before Christ, we find that in a little country, which could be placed several times over in almost any of your states, there were divisions of dialect which made quite near neighbors almost unintelligible to each other. There were Athens and Thebes between thirty and forty miles apart, as different as towns could be. One was intellectual, one was stupid. One spoke a language which could be understood by anybody who knows Greek at all, the other spoke a language which I might very safely present to a very decent Greek scholar, and be almost certain that unless he happened to have worked on this particular line he would make nothing out of it. So different are the words, the pronunciation, the whole genus of speech, that it seems almost another language.

Nor was it dialect alone that divided Greek from Greek. The country was divided into tiny commonwealths that were constantly at war with each other. The Greek spirit of freedom showed itself in individualism gone mad, and the result was what you might expect. When one town in a small country hated another town worse than it hated outsiders, when even within one town one party hated the other party far more than anybody outside, the end was inevitable. Under their powerful and unscrupulous neighbor, Philip of Macedon, the father of the great Alexander, Greece was subjugated, and all the little city states forced to come together under one rule. They never had any real independence again.

Then Alexander took his Greeks away with him into distant lands. He made those wonderful military expeditions of which we read, when he penetrated as far as India. One of many by-products of Alexander's short life work was the unification of Greece and the spread of Hellenism far and wide. Greeks from Athens and Sparta and Thebes had to meet in regular intercourse. As always happens when men with different dialects are thrown together for long, uniformity of speech began to arise. The intellectual primacy of Attic Greek, the dialect of Athens, brought it naturally to the top; and Attic, only shorn of marked peculiarities, became the basis of what is virtually a new language. Classical scholars have been accustomed to talk of Greece as if it came to an end somewhere in the fourth century before Christ, but the Greek language was not dead; she was hardly even sleeping, and after a brief interval we see her as a world power, risen from the dead with the New Testament in her hand. Greek became the language of commerce, the language of daily intercourse, over a vast and constantly increasing area. Greek was spoken in Rome, so much so that the Emperor Marcus Aurelius wrote his private meditations in Greek, that Paul wrote his letter to the Romans in Greek, that the satirist Juvenal says Rome had become practically a Greek city. It was needless to learn Latin even if one were going to settle in Rome itself.

As to the extent over which Greek spread one of the most vivid illustrations of it has recently come to light. Last October I was startled by a piece of news which was given to me by Professor E. G. Browne, the great Persian scholar of Cam-

* From an address at Northfield.

bridge University. He told me that he had just had a very interesting present from a remote part of the world. A Kurdish Christian doctor, named Said Khan, had been called to a place away up in the mountains of Persia, a district called Avroman, in order to treat a sick Kurd chief. He responded at the risk of his life, but happily he was successful in his work. I have a letter from him which is written in very indifferent English, but which betrays the language of the heart that every one who loves Christ can understand. This good man received, apparently as part of his reward for his services, something which he instantly saw was of great value. It was just a little clay pot, and in that pot there were some parchment documents. One was in a language which so far no one has been able to interpret. Presumably it was a local dialect, but we cannot be quite sure what dialect it is. Two were in Greek, and they were exactly dated, one 88 B. C., the other 22 B. C. They were title deeds of a vineyard. Evidently this pot was some sort of a safe in which these title deeds had been deposited for keeping. Here you have an example of an astonishing fact: you have Greek away among the wild mountains of Persia, and dated in the first century before Christ. It is a vivid illustration of that chapter in Acts where Jews from every nation under heaven uttered their amazement as they heard their native languages being spoken by men of Galilee. Parthians and Medes and Elamites, coming from the very district where that little pot was found, could talk together in Greek when they met for worship in Jerusalem, just as we see they could write Greek for business purposes far away in the lands where they had made their home. That little pot and its parchments tell us how the first Christian missionaries were able so quickly to publish their message everywhere.

We are not dealing here with the language of books, a language which became more and more archaic as time went on, striving to maintain the purity of the Attic of the fourth and fifth centuries before Christ. We are dealing now with the vernacular, which could be spoken and written by half-educated farmers in Egypt, by the illiterate man away in the wilds of Persia, spoken from Spain to Persia and from Rome to Alexandria and the cataracts of the Nile. How long had that vernacular been in existence? Only at most from about the third century before Christ; and even during this period the wide extension of Greek was only characteristic of the later generations. We may safely say that the period during which Greek was at the height of its power, the period during which it was understood intelligently by the largest number of people, was the time just before and just after the coming of Christ, the first century before Christ and perhaps the first two centuries A. D., just exactly the time when it could be used for the great purpose of evangelization.

I need say little to show how these providential conditions helped Paul's work. Look at our missionary conditions today. Our missionaries laboring in far countries all over the world have to spend the best part of two long years eating their hearts out in eagerness to preach to the people, but unable to preach until they have learned enough of the language to be sure that they will not be doing more harm than good. That was not the case in the first century. When Paul went from Palestine to speak in Cilicia, or any other place, he found very little difference in the Greek, only such difference as there is between the English of England and the English of America. He could travel to Rome, he could travel beyond to Spain, he might have traveled to Egypt or to Persia, and everywhere, wherever he went, he could talk that same Greek and be understood at once. There was no time wasted in learning the language. And remember that gaining time was really one of the most important conditions of success for the Christian propaganda in the first century. Why was it that the church had such amazing success in those first generations? Why, because the missionaries of the cross lost no time.

While some men were digging in a deep ditch the walls fell in upon them. A man passing by stopped to look on the work of rescue. Suddenly someone cried out to him:

"Your brother is down there!"

And then he woke to action, and joined in love's labor.

TIMELY EXPOSITORY SUGGESTIONS.

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan draws attention to the fact that the same Greek word is translated "generation" in Matthew 1. 1 and "birth" in 1. 18. The birth-roll names Jesus as the son of Joseph, but in verse 18 Matthew says, "The generation, birth, of Jesus Christ was on this wise, not on that wise. What you have read in the first seventeen verses was not so; I will tell you what was so," and he tells the matchless, mystic story of the virgin birth of our Lord.

"Every day I live I more and more thank God that before my ordination, when I was following the profession for which I was prepared, that of a schoolmaster, I spent three years among the Hebrew people. I got to know the Hebrew people, and in that period I helped to prepare at least twenty-five or thirty boys for their Hebrew confirmation, their 'barmitzvah.' Now every Hebrew boy of devout parentage can produce for you his table of genealogy, and you will find a boy producing it,—he has to produce it,—at his confirmation. And if you pick it up and translate it, it will read like this, 'The book of the generation of Isaac Grossmith, the son of' it may be 'David,'—it will be if he is a Jew of the line of David,—it may not be David, but it will always end with 'the son of Abraham.' There are thousands of them in the world today. Now, that is what you have here. Where did Matthew get that list? Without any question he copied from the archives, for Jesus had to be enrolled, and he could not be enrolled as the son of Mary. That would be illegal. No Jewish boy was allowed to be enrolled as the son of a woman; he had to be enrolled in relation to the father, and in this case to the husband of Mary. And Matthew, who wrote his Gospel for the Hebrew and for the Jew, in order to introduce the person copied the archives, and there you have exactly what you would have found if you could have gone to the synagogue in Nazareth and turned it up, or if you had gone to the family afterwards and turned it up."

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall be the gathering of the people (or more literally, unto him shall be the submission or homage of the peoples). Genesis 49. 10.

For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts. Haggai 2. 6, 7, 9.

The Jews, even the rationalist Rashi, have always identified Shiloh with Messiah, the prince of peace.

Jacob's prophecy of the "last times" (of verse 1) fixes the advent of Messiah as within the period of Judah's tribal existence. When Judah followed Israel into exile the incredulous might have insisted that Shiloh or Messiah had not and would not now come, since Judah was at the end of its history. But Judah returned from Babylon with its tribal traditions and genealogies intact, and to it were given three more prophets. Two of them, Haggai and Malachi, still more closely defined the outer limit of the time of Messiah's coming. Haggai clearly identifies the Desire of all nations who was to come with the Shiloh to whom the gathering of the nations should be, and predicts that Messiah was to appear during the existence of this latter house (i.e., the second temple), "This house, this one," as the Hebrew has it. Malachi confirms this prophecy, predicting that the divine Lord for whom they were seeking, and the messenger of the covenant for whom they were longing, was suddenly to come to his temple.

But the genealogies of Judah, and with them the identity of this tribe, were destroyed by Herod. After Christ's day, therefore, no Messiah could be proved as sprung from this or any other particular tribe. The prophecy of Jacob, therefore, could not be fulfilled after the Christian era. Nor could Messiah come to his temple after its destruction by the Romans. The Jews recognized this latter difficulty. They knew the meaning of Haggai's and Malachi's predictions very well, and sought

therefore three times to rebuild the temple. They would assist in fulfilling a prophecy already fulfilled in Christ. They would have the temple erected, and in order for the coming of some other Messiah who was never to come. These attempted rebuildings occurred in the reigns of Hadrian, Constantine and Julian, the latter of whom himself offered to defray the cost, out of hatred to Christianity and desire to discredit the Messiahship of Jesus. But great earthquakes destroyed both the new foundations and the workmen who were laying them.

We get an echo of the "Yet once, it is a little while" of Haggai's prediction of the first coming in the prediction of the second coming of Messiah which the writer of the Hebrews makes: "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry." The revisers translate, "Yet a very little while," but the literal reading "A little while,—how little! how little!" has in it, when read in the light of Christian history, a whole world of pathos and unconscious literary artistry.

They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. Matthew 1. 23.

Jews deny that Jesus fulfilled this Messianic prophecy of Isaiah, since Jesus was not named Emmanuel. But this name was not the actual name of Messiah, but a descriptive name, such as Wonderful. The numerous names of the coming One characterized him in different aspects. His real name was kept hidden by God until the time of his advent lest it should be used by impostors and false Messiahs.

No man ever called Jesus "comrade" in the days of his humiliation. He himself with infinite condescension used the word to another,—none other than to Judas Iscariot,—"Comrade (hetaire), wherefore art thou come?" (Matthew 26. 50). It has been left to our disrespectful age to give him a title redolent of the shabbier associations of social democracy.

Lord Jesus had no class consciousness. He was the saviour of all men, even of the rich, grasping publicans. He was not an anti-poverty preacher, not an anti-slavery agitator, not a revolutionist of a social sort,—which is not to say that Christians today should not be such. He was an internal revolutionist, a saviour from sin, a thing which the socialist overlooks, but which represents the worst bondage of all. On occasion he declared himself a king,—which is not to deny Christ's fellowship with toilers.

Mary.

I think so often of Mary,
Mary the mother glad,
Who lived in the Nazareth cottage
When Christ was a little lad.

I think of her in the morning
As she put on his little frock,
And brushed the curls from his forehead,
Smoothing each shining lock,
And heard him speak with reverence
A little sunrise prayer,
With a look of childlike wonder
Upon his face so fair.

When Joseph had gone to the workshop,
The cottage made trim and neat,
And Jesus played with the children
Who lived across the street,
I think like the sound of music
Was the echo of his voice,
Which set her pulses thrilling
And made her heart rejoice.

And when he brought his bruises
For her to touch and kiss,
And she smiled away his troubles
With all a mother's bliss,
I think that over her spirit
Stole a promise of endless rest,
As she "magnified the Father"
Who had given her his best.

Then, when the shadows deepened,
And the child, now tired of play,
Rested his head on her bosom
At the close of a weary day,
As she taught him a psalm of praises,
And mused on prophecies dear,
I think that the song of angels
Fell on her listening ear.

So I often think of Mary,
Mary the mother glad,
Who lived in the Nazareth cottage
When Christ was a little lad.

—Selected.

NOTES FROM A GIRL'S BIBLES—IV.

Mrs. W. R. Moody.

Fret not,—he knows. Psalm 37. 1.
Fear not,—he cares. Luke 12. 32.
Faint not,—he loves. Hebrews 12. 3, 6.

Fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5. 22, 23.

Love.
Joy is love exulting.
Peace is love in repose.
Longsuffering is love on trial.
Gentleness is love outflowing.
Goodness is love in action.
Faith is love in the battlefield.
Meekness is love at school.
Self-control is love in training.

Relationship: Its Result in Prayer.

(*Second of six studies.*)

We all pray according to our relationship with God. Saying prayers in a mechanical way will not bring about a vital relationship with God. Real prayer is consciousness of relationship with God. We pray because we know we are his children and can call him "Our Father."

Possibly our first real prayer was our first consciousness of relationship. If we are talking with God in the same vocabulary which we used in childhood, we may be spiritual dwarfs.

Luke 11. 1. "Lord, teach us to pray!" A petition which should precede every prayer.

Romans 8. 26, 27. The great saints are those who have learned to pray "according to the will of God." If there is anything in prayer, there is everything. Either we are taking it too seriously and wasting too much energy, or we are not intelligent and learning to pray according to God's laws.

DEFINITIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Habit is a channel through which good or bad may flow. It may be cultivated in the spiritual realm as in the physical and mental. In this respect you are different from five or ten years ago; i.e., it is harder to change a habit. Be master of physical, mental, and spiritual habits.

Prayer is a spiritual habit which may be cultivated. It makes a channel in character through which good will flow.

Ideals are a great help in forming habits. One girl's life was changed by a letter from another girl in which was this paragraph: "I want to have power with God in prayer; to be a woman of prayer; never to be too busy to look up, or to sit quietly at his feet and talk with him."

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in thy presence will avail to make!
What burdens lighten, what temptations slake!
What parched grounds refresh as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all the distant and the near
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear.
We kneel, how weak! We rise, how full of power!
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,—
Or others,—that we are not always strong,
That we are ever overborne with care,
That we should ever weak or faithless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with thee?

To ideals like these every heart responds, "I want to be like that." How can we be changed? 2 Corinthians 3. 18, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Luke 9. 29, "And as he prayed the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering." The habit of prayer will change a character and a countenance.

Prayer is like a power plant. Our part is to make the connection and realize the power.

Prayer is a bank from which we may draw out the interest on the principal. It is of no use if left in the bank. F. B. Meyer said, "Learn to appropriate from God's nature what you need for your character."

Prayer is an investment of time. There is a fire brick in England which is advertized: "For every moment of saturation there is a corresponding moment of illumination."

Prayer is a well. We may let down the bucket to be filled.

Prayer is like the wireless. If my will and God's cross, there is discord. If my will and his are parallel, there is harmony and communion.

Prayer is like a magnet. Matthew 18. 20.

Prayer is like a dredge. It makes room in us for a bigger God.

Prayer is like the electric button. We use it, and coöperate with unseen forces.

Prayer is a battlefield on which we win or lose.

Dr. J. H. Jowett has called prayer "the gymnasium of the soul." We can know all definitions, and not pray. We can say prayers, and not pray. "Break through words and get behind them into their meaning. Say 'Our Father,' and stop. What does it mean to you? Realize your relationship."

The most common excuse for not praying is the lack of time. Honesty compels the admission that prayer is just as difficult in leisure moments, and often more so, than in the stress and strain of need. It is inclination, or an appetite, that is needed. In the meantime, conscientious perusal of the habit of prayer will cultivate a taste for prayer.

OUR BOOK TABLE.

The Quimby Manuscripts, edited by Horatio W. Dresser. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York. Frontispiece, 440 pages, and photographic reproductions of manuscripts. $3 net.

Every student of mental and spiritual healing must take account of this book, which discusses—or rather, reproduces—the discoveries and beliefs of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, and incidentally sets at rest some of the controversial points that have arisen regarding the origin of Christian Science.

"Dr." Quimby was a young man in business in Maine who became interested in mental phenomena and their connection with disease through his own healing from consumption. He passed through mesmerism in his groping after the peculiar tenets he held later regarding spiritual healing in dependence on the divine presence.

Mrs. Eddy became a patient of his in 1862. She was his loyal and grateful student and admirer as long as he lived (he died in 1866, aged 64). Not until after his death did she claim that the stuff she put out was her own. Documentary proof is obvious that the kernel of her teaching was Dr. Quimby's actual material copied by her.

This volume is not controversial, but is almost wholly a reprint of Dr. Quimby's original writings, with enough editorial notes to give them their proper setting. But the average reader will be interested in the light it throws upon Mrs. Eddy's claim to have been the inventor of Christian Science as it was at the first. This very title was used by Quimby in 1863, and for years previously he had been writing of and teaching the "Science of Christ," with some variations in the use of the words. Indeed, his ideas seem to have been crystallized and committed to writing long before Mrs. Eddy ever saw him.

Christmas Gift Books.

Miracle on Hermon (The), by John Marvin Dean. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. Frontispiece, 64 pages. 60 cents net.

The story of an aged surviving disciple of Christ in Syria, and the reason why every December he left his home and devoted ten days to going from hamlet to hamlet and hut to hut with the rude tools of a village carpenter, offering his services free; then reaching home by Christmas Eve, he kept open house all day Christmas.

Hermas himself tells the story of the Holy Visitation and the Vision of the Shining Tools to Parmenas, who relates it in this book form.

Tree of Light (The), by James A. B. Scherer. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York. 125 pages. $1.35 net.

How Christmas came to Early England is the burden of this pretty story. It was 500 years before King Alfred. Tradition and Tacitus furnish the foundation upon which the tale is built.

British kings and Roman governors, Druids and common people, intended human sacrifice and Roman feast, occupy the stage. The scene is mostly in England, but ex-King Caradoc in exile at Rome meets Paul and learns of Christ and Christmas. With the truth of the gospel he returns home.

The "Tree of Light" is the fir tree which replaced the Druid oak in the first Christmas celebration in England.

Truce of God (The), by Mary Roberts Rinehart. George H. Doran Co., New York. 96 pages, illustrated. $1.50.

This versatile authoress has woven a charming story of the days of French chivalry with a Christmas setting. A seigneur has driven away his lady for

lack of a son. It is the day before Christmas as the story begins, and a truce of God has been proclaimed by the church. Charles the Fair's sulky, dissatisfied humor is dissipated ere the story closes the next day with the birth of a son and reconciliation with his wife.

The make-up of the book is very attractive, with full-page illustrations and decorations, and every thing about the book in holiday attire.

Fiction.

Lure of the Leopard Skin (The), by Josephine Hope Westervelt. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. Frontispiece, 240 pages. $1.75 net.

The author's object was to write a story of African adventure as a means of describing the value of mission work.

A young American is the hero. He is not interested in the Bible or Christianity, and gets into circles in Africa that resent missionary effort for the uplift of the natives. But he is later necessarily thrown into contact with such effort, and not only comes to respect it but becomes a Christian.

The adventures and facts narrated make good reading, even if the story itself is rather artificial. But why, why did the author make her hero a slacker?

Valley of Gold (The), by David Howarth. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. Illustrated, 272 pages. $1.75 net.

The story starts off at the crack of the whip. Threshing in the Qu'Appelle Valley of the Saskatchewan was hung up by a storm, and Sparrow's pool-room was crowded with men. A bet was made between two threshing outfits as to which could lick the other in a thirty-day output. So it started.

The rivalry of the two leaders introduces many plots and counterplots, but the right man wins in the end. It is a rattling good story of the wheat country of the North West, with enough of the romance of love to balance the sterner and wickeder doings of the men folk.

Vindication of Robert Creighton (The), by Daniel Frederick Fox. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. Frontispiece, 272 pages. $1.75 net.

The character who gives the title to the novel was a surveyor who did work for a railroad in the South West. False entries were sent in to Washington for concessions, and Creighton was railroaded into the penitentiary as the scapegoat. The story begins just after his release, and introduces the second hero, who gets Creighton a job on some big water system. Presently Quinn leaves those parts on some sort of a mystery trip, during which he is shipwrecked and lands on the Isle of Patmos. Alternate

From "The Vindication of Robert Creighton."

chapters are given to the religious and historical musings of the monks on Patmos, and to the conventional open air and construction camp life of the South West, with approved uplift work for the aristocratic but submerged gentlemen from the East who constitute the labor gang. It all turns out happily all the way around.

Special.

Bible Encyclopædia, Critical and Expository, by A. R. Fausset. Geo. H. Doran Co., New York. 753 pages, with 600 woodcuts and index of texts referred to. $3.00 net.

Dictionary of the Bible (A), by William Smith. Geo. H. Doran Co., New York. 1017 pages. $3.00 net.

Life of Christ (The), by F. W. Farrar. Geo. H. Doran Co., New York. 744 pages. $3.00 net.

Life and Epistles of Saint Paul (The), by W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson. Geo. H. Doran Co., New York. 917 pages. $3.00 net.

Doran has done the newer generations of theologues and Bible students a good turn by publishing these standard and dependable works at a reasonable price. Each is in a single volume. The books are clearly printed, and in uniform cloth binding.

A person who owns these volumes has a comprehensive Biblical library.

How to Live the Victorious Life, by An Unknown Christian. 143 pages. Marshall Brothers, London: 2/6 net. Pres-

byterian Bookstore, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York.

The contents of this book first appeared as a series of articles in the "Life of Faith." It was at once recognized that they sounded a clear and needed note in the uncertainties of today, and so they are preserved in book form.

By "victorious life" the writer means the life of victory over sin (not sinlessness), the life of holiness, the perfect life, through the power of the indwelling Christ. By Scriptural exposition and anecdote and illustration he gives the seeker after victory instruction on all the points one needs to know,—surrender, real victory and false, a gift—not a struggle, the perils that beset the life of holiness and how they may be met and overcome,—explaining the various figures under which the Bible presents the truth.

Not everybody is able to speak from personal experience on such themes. The present writer has both the experience of victory and the knowledge and ability to explain it. Such books are constantly needed as new generations ignorant of the truth keep coming on.

Old Paths in the Light of Modern Thought (The), by J. Russell Howden. China Inland Mission, London and Philadelphia. 99 pages. $1.

Just the book for a person who is bothered by the apparent breach between science and the Bible. For it takes its stand upon the earlier chapters of the Bible as truth, and defends them as fundamental to Christian faith.

The author is not only at home in the Bible, but he can discuss with lucidity geology and psychology and any other "ologies" that are to the point.

Beginning with the Genesis account of creation he shows that the known facts of geology, as distinct from theories of geology and guesses of geologists, instead of contradicting the Bible enable us to understand more of and to see further into the meaning of the phraseology of the Word of God, just as a lens exhibits features in the moon of which an astronomer had no idea before. Conversely, the Hebrew words ought not to be judged by the Greek or English translations of them, which are so often faulty or inadequate. Thus, the Hebrew word translated "grass" in Genesis 1.11 simply means "sproutage"; the word "firmament" in verse 6, meaning in English something fixed and solid, misrepresents the Hebrew word, which would be better translated by "expanse," something just stretched out.

Passing from material creation to man Mr. Howden discusses his threefold nature,—body, soul and spirit,—with other Biblical terms like "heart." He shows that man is distinguished from the brute creation by self-consciousness, reason, morality and language. Our knowledge of man is consistent with the statement that God made man in his own image. The Bible explanation of man's origin and being is truer to life than any other explanation.

The fall of man is taken up in the light of biology. Here modern theories conflict with the Bible record, especially the evolutionary theory. Mr. Howden first puts forward six statements in answer to evolution, then gives some positive declarations regarding man's position in the world, and follows with an exposition of Genesis 2 and 3. A chapter on faith in the light of experience concludes the book.

The chief value of the book lies in its fair and fearless approach to the real difficulties it deals with. Its masterful handling of the subject is revealed in its quiet, kindly and positive tone. No reader can despise it either for its spirit or for its scholarly valuation.

Sermonic.

Intention of His Soul (The), by Hubert L. Simpson. Geo. H. Doran Co., New York. 260 pages. $2.00 net.

"Essays for the Untheologically-Minded" is the subtitle. The introduction and the twenty-six chapters read like essays, not like spoken addresses. They are very able, abounding in references and illustrations,—indeed, there are almost too many quotation marks. The Scripture texts of the essays are unusual, and there is nothing strained in their homely modern applications to the period of the war and reconstruction.

Life of Christ (The), by Reginald J. Campbell. D. Appleton and Co., New York. 438 pages. $3 net.

The opening sentence of the Preface is apt at first glance to queer the book, in that it speaks of a life of Christ "to meet the needs of the ordinary churchgoer in regard to the devout study of the subject without ignoring the accepted conclusions of scholarship." "Accepted conclusions of scholarship" indeed! What conclusions? What scholarship? What affectation!

However, what Dr. Campbell does is to reproduce matter that has been preached almost in its entirety to Sunday congregations. His point of view is Christian experience: Jesus Christ is interpreted in view of nineteen centuries of Christian experience of him rather than along lines of critical interpretation of the limited available literature. This gives healthy and devotional results.

Opening chapters deal with the problem of the life of Jesus, the principal sources of information, religious and race conditions at the time he lived, and the canonical Gospels and extra-canonical writings. Then follow studies in the outstanding phases and incidents of our Lord's career,

concluding with appendices discussing his personal appearance and the kind of home in which he lived. Footnotes and a bibliography direct the reader to the author's chief sources.

Remembering that unhappily Dr. Campbell has proved an unreliable leader or thinker in the past, it is still true that he is sincere, brilliant, devout. He writes with charm, and though the reader may dispute a few statements and assumptions one cannot but gain spiritual blessing and added insight into the supreme subject from a sympathetic reading of the volume. He has left behind his New Thought and rationalizing novelties. He insists upon having a vital personal experience of the redemptive power of Christ before one is in a position to comprehend the gospel story.

A New S. S. Teacher's Help.

Snowden's Sunday School Lessons 1922, by James H. Snowden. Macmillan Company, New York. 329 pages. $1.50.

We welcome this most attractive volume of practical expositions of the International Sunday School Lessons for 1922, designated on the title page as the "first annual volume." Its attractive appearance is equalled by the value of its contents.

Dr. Snowden's arrangement of each lesson section is: After the titles and references the text of the lesson portion from the Authorized Version is printed in full. Then come about five pages of readable exposition, divided into four or five subsections and with the eternal principles of God's dealings with man and present-day applications printed in bold face type.

There is one serious error and shortcoming. Nowhere in the book is a list given of the lessons as set by the International Committee. For instance, Dr. Snowden gives 1 Kings 18. 20-24, 30, 36-39 as the lesson for January 15. The lesson set by the committee is 1 Kings 18. 1-46, though the verses to be printed in the helps are as above. But no one can understand these scattered verses without reading the whole lesson, and as a matter of fact Dr. Snowden covers the 46 verses in his exposition.

The expository style with practical applications of this book is our beau ideal of popular Bible study and teaching. A teacher who masters Dr. Snowden's matter will do enduring work in his class.

Various Themes.

Bible and Its Enemies (The), by William Jennings Bryan. Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago. 38 pages. 25 cents.

After a warm tribute to D. L. Moody as an illustration of how God can infuse spiritual power into man, Mr. Bryan pays his respects to the agnostic, the atheist, the destructive critic, and the evolutionist. He has lost none of his force and eloquence as a speaker.

Divine Healing, by Herbert Pakenham-Walsh. Macmillan Co., New York. 54 pages. 50 cents.

A valuable statement of conclusions reached as to the principles and methods of divine healing by one who has practised this side of Christian ministry neglected by most of us.

The bishop of Assam states that "the will of God to heal is abundantly clear in nature and revelation," but that evidently there are cases where "servants of God, even though strong in faith, are called upon to continue bearing sickness and pain."

The bishop never anoints the sick when there is every presumption that by the use of ordinary medical means they will get well. Out of 358 cases anointed 101 were entirely healed, 70 were markedly improved, and in 141 cases there was no improvement or no report.

We ought not to permit various unchristian cults and individual healers working for profit to appropriate the field of spiritual healing, but the Christian church ought to use prayer and faith in Christ more either to coöperate with or to supplement the work of doctors.—W. L. H.

Games, compiled by George O. Draper. Association Press, New York. 148 pages. $1.

A pocket-size volume suggesting 300 games for playing indoors and outdoors, by large groups and small, old and young, and on occasions ordinary and special. The contents are divided into: I, Games for Schools; II, Sociable Games for Home, Church, Clubs, etc.; III, Outdoor Games; IV, Games for Special Occasions, as at the dining table, picnics, etc.

Isolation Plan (The), by William H. Blymer. Cornhill Publishing Co., Boston. 152 pages. $2.

For thirty years the author has been an observer and student of international relations, and in this volume, first copyrighted in 1917, he crystallizes his ideas upon general disarmament, arbitration and isolation. The latter means the boycotting of naughty nations by strict non-intercourse and certain sanctions; but the threefold plan must be put in operation before its parts can be effective, he thinks.

One who wishes the most advanced suggestions on these all-important topics meets them in this book, either supported or criticized and found wanting. Annexes give the author's own draft for an Arbitration and Disarmament Convention, the Constitution and the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Wilson Points, and comments by the author upon these historic proposals.

There are many eye-openers in the book. For instance, Mr. Blymer thought it would have been cheaper and more effective for America to have bought up all the navies of the world and scrapped them, and even to have undertaken the rehabilitation of countries devastated by the war, rather than enter into the game of war herself.

Manhood of Humanity: The Science and Art of Human Engineering, by Alfred Korzybski. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. 264 pages, with appendices. $3.

The author thinks he has discovered man's true place in creation, and that he is setting forth a new concept of life.

Apart from minerals, which are not living things, he finds three cardinal classes of life: plant life, which transforms solar energy into organic chemical energy, and which he therefore calls the chemistry-binding class; animal life, possessing further kinetic energy, faculty and freedom to move about in space, and hence called the space-binding class; and human life, possessing in addition a most remarkable capacity to summarize, digest and appropriate the experiences of the past, to conduct itself in the ever-increasing light of inherited wisdom, and to plan for the future, and hence called the time-binding class. These classes are as different in dimensions as lines, surfaces and solids.

Count Korzybski's method is mathematical, that is, he discusses things with the attempted precision of mathematics, and often with the use of formulæ and charts. That is the meaning of the subtitle of the book, since engineering is an exact science that can deal only with known facts and formulæ.

The author contends that for lack of the above true classification of life all previous calculations in ethics, economics and life generally involving man as a mere animal, or as animal plus a supernatural something, have missed the mark and involved us in prevailing difficulties and confusion. He devotes a chapter to the childhood of humanity, and applies his theory to wealth, the capitalistic era, the survival of the fittest ("This theory is only for the physical bodies of animals; its effect upon humanity is sinister and degrading"), and other practical subjects, by way of illustration.

Because of its sincerity and novelty and the many true things it says the book is worth the careful study of every thinking man. Its grave defect is that it ignores the existence of Bible revelation in toto. Gods and God are mentioned two or three times as the unknown factor introduced by our savage ancestors to account for phenomena they could not explain. However, the author's standpoint is that he takes creation as he finds it, just as an engineer takes the forces of nature and uses them without discussing their essence or their past or future. Perhaps that is why he does not in this first book touch upon man's origin or destiny, or anything outside the realm of observed fact.

What better gift for Christmas, New Year, or birthday, than a good book?

Methods with Beginners, by Frances Weld Danielson. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 162 pages. 60 cents.

A technical book for teachers of beginners in the Bible school, that is, children under six. It discusses the teacher, the child, the class room and its furnishings, the program, worship and prayer, music, giving and the missionary spirit, the use of pictures, telling stories, records and recognition, standards of promotion, and other aspects of the work. The effect of the Sunday hour upon the child during the week, and home coöperation, are also considered. Questions, Problems for Discussion, and Assignments for Observation are appended to chapters.

Everything represents the latest and best thought and experience. For instance, in the chapter on "Materials for Religious Education" we are told that the old idea was to save the story of Jesus' birth for Christmas Sunday, but the new idea is to tell it early in December so that the child will know what Christmas means and have the Christmas spirit aroused.

What Christianity Means to Me, by Lyman Abbott. Macmillan Co., New York. 194 pages. $1.75.

"I began," says Dr. Abbott, "a systematic study of the New Testament when I entered the ministry in 1860. Since then I have been a student of one book and follower of one Master. My aim in life has been to understand the principles which Jesus Christ inculcated, and to possess something of the spirit which animated him, that I might apply both his principles and his spirit to the solution of the various problems, individual and social, of our time. . . . . This volume is an endeavor to state simply and clearly the results of these sixty years of Bible study, this more than sixty years of Christian experience."

The book, whose first chapter is written on the 85th birthday of so outstanding a personality as Lyman Abbott, will possess an interest all its own, and, if nothing more, the interest of a life possessing after four score years a most unusual intellectual force. Few men are able to do anything at 85, let alone write a book like this. As one turns its pages one finds apparently no abatement of Dr. Abbott's unusual force. There is still the same luminous quality of style, felicity of diction and rare spiritual insight. Dr. Abbott has always been a liberal, at least in the region of theology, but the world changes so rapidly

that the liberal of forty years ago may be the conservative of today.

Dr. Abbott has always defined religion in terms of life and tested theology by experience. The church he considers as divine in its mission, divine in the spirit of life with which its Master endows it, but human in its forms of belief, of worship and organization. It is really a Christian brotherhood, and obedience to Christ's commands is the only condition which Christ has prescribed for membership in the Christian brotherhood. The gospel of Christ is the gospel of glad tidings; the mission of Christ is to give life, and to give it above measure. The Christian life is too great to be confined within a church and its creeds, its rituals and its liturgies. Jesus Christ is the supreme manifestation history affords of what God is and what we may become. He came to seek and to save the lost. Salvation is not deliverance from punishment, it is deliverance from sin. Vicarious atonement is the law of life; all sacrifice for the sake of any greater or better thing is a part of the process and passion of the cross, and the cross only lifts into a supreme and unique glory a saving power which is everywhere manifest.

The kingdom of God is a new empire established in the obedient and living souls of men.

Dr. Abbott sums up his faith by saying, Christianity means a new spirit of love, service and sacrifice in humanity, a new and ever-developing life and relief (the reviewer would say "release,") from the burden of past errors, blunders and sins, an ever-growing aspiration for the future, an ever-increasing power toward achievement, a great power of faith and love and hope made real in Jesus Christ.

Of course there is not everything between the covers of this little book, nor would all the readers of this review agree with Dr. Abbott in his theological definitions; but if such a spirit as he idealizes could be made actual amongst us we would not be far from the kingdom of God.—G. G. A.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Foundations of Faith (The), by Rev. John Kelman, D. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. 206 pages. $1.50 net.

Making the Bible Real, by Frederic Breading Oxtoby, M. A., D. D. F. H. Revell Co., New York. 95 pages. $1.00 net.

Ruling Lines of Progressive Revelation, by W. Graham Scroggie. Geo. H. Doran Co., New York. 144 pages. $1.50 net.

Say Fellows! by Wade C. Smith. F. H. Revell Co., New York. 173 pages. $1.25 net.

Thinking Through the New Testament, by J. J. Ross. F. H. Revell Co., New York. 254 pages. $1.75 net.

From "The Valley of Gold" (p. 981).

What the Wild Flowers Tell Us, by Dudley O. Osterheld. F. H. Revell Co., New York. 191 pages. $1.50 net.

ALSO RECEIVED.

The Jew in America, by David Philipson. A second tract issued by the Union of Hebrew Congregations, Cincinnati, O. After reading it we are in doubt whether the Irish or the Jews made the United States.

The Trinity: Must We Believe in it? 10 cents.

Is Sunday the Christian's Rest Day? 5 cents.

Christian Perfection: Does the Bible Teach that it is Possible? 5 cents.

Is Salvation Safe? or, Can the Child of God Become a Child of the Devil? 25 cents.

Bright, pointed studies by Keith L. Brooks, of the Los Angeles Bible Institute. Published by the Biola Book Room, 536 S. Hope Street, Los Angeles, Calif.

Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the Year 1920. 150 Fifth Avenue, New York. 738 pages.

Minutes of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., 1921. 1319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia. 1068 pages.

Some day we hope to dig into these mines of inspiration and bring out nuggets for our readers.

Any book acknowledged, reviewed, or advertised in this magazine will be forwarded postpaid by the publishers of the RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK upon receipt of the advertised price. Remit by check, postal or express order, or by currency. Do not send stamps.

SELECTED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

(Learn a Text a Day.)

DECEMBER, 1921.

THURSDAY, 1st. *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. John 14. 1.*

When disappointment scatters
Your hopes, like autumn leaves;
When all is lost that matters,
And all is left that grieves;
When chastisement and sorrow
On darkened days are laid,
Let not your heart be troubled
Nor let it be afraid!

FRIDAY, 2nd. *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. Acts 10. 38.*

His public worship, his faith in God, his private prayer, his eternal hope, and his transfigured hours all centered around and issued in a devoted life of helpfulness to people.—Harry Emerson Fosdick.

SATURDAY, 3rd. *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Ephesians 6. 12.*

There are two essentials in getting victory over the enemy. The first is to recognize who is the tempter, and the second is to plead the blood of Jesus. Our enemy is not the people about us, but something behind the people.—S. D. Gordon.

SUNDAY, 4th. *Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, and givest them tears to drink in great measure. Psalm 80. 5.*

The answers to our prayers are sometimes far different from our expectations. We ask for strength, and gladness, and freedom from burden, because we can discern no higher possible good, and we find ourselves disappointed and puzzled at the inrush of new sorrow which obliterates every token of divine care. Well it is for us that God passes all our prayers through the refining medium of his own wisdom, and that he sends us larger and truer answers than we have ever dreamed of, even though those same answers bring us pain and tears where we looked for ease and joy.—J. Stuart Holden.

MONDAY, 5th. *The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. Ephesians 3. 19.*

How little of the sea can a child carry in his hand! As little as I take away of my great sea, the boundless love of Christ.—Samuel Rutherford.

TUESDAY, 6th. *If thou believest with all thine heart. . . . . Acts 8. 37.*

Faith will not lodge in the same heart with indifference. Faith wants a whole heart to itself. It says, "If this salvation is worth anything it is worth everything."—Joseph Parker.

WEDNESDAY, 7th. *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Colossians 3. 17.*

Thanking God can become an unreality just as truly as any of the other best things in life. It is very poor gratitude that does not sometimes openly express itself, but fixed phrases of gratitude are a peril, and a spirit that truly praises God with an occasional oral word is better than constant verbal phrases that do not cut deep into the heart.—Robt. E. Speer.

THURSDAY, 8th. *The lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. Luke 14. 23.*

Toil on, faint not, keep watch and pray;
Be wise the erring soul to win;
Go forth into the world's highway;
Compel the wanderer to come in.

FRIDAY, 9th. *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. Revelation 3. 20.*

Come in, thou blessed of the Lord! Come in and spread for us the feast! Come in and take possession of every room and closet of our lives! Come in and sup with us!—David J. Burrell.

SATURDAY, 10th. *His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful. Matthew 25. 21.*

No man is entitled to "Well done" until he has done well.

SUNDAY, 11th. *And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. Matthew 13. 58.*

If Christ could not do many mighty works because of their unbelief, how can we expect to accomplish anything if the people of God are unbelieving? I contend that God's children are alone able to hinder God's work. Infidels, atheists and skeptics cannot do it. Where there is union, strong faith and expectation among Christians a mighty work is always done. There is no power on earth that can stand before the

onward march of God's people when they are in dead earnest.—D. L. Moody.

MONDAY, 12th. *If ye throughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye throughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever. Jeremiah 7. 5-7.*

Whether we, our neighbor or God be the judge, absolutely the only value of our "religious" life to ourselves or to any one else is what it fits us for and enables us to do.—Wilfred T. Grenfell.

TUESDAY, 13th. *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10. 10.*

Abundant life is not a different kind of life: it's simply a matter of supply. It is an abundance of the same kind of life that every Christian has. And anything less than that abundance is sin.

WEDNESDAY, 14th. *Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Psalm 62. 8.*

Confide ye aye in Providence,
For Providence is kind;
An bear ye a' life's changes wi'
A calm and tranquil mind.
Tho' pressed and hemmed on every side,
Hae faith an' ye'll win through;
For ilka blade o' grass that grows,
Keeps its ain drap o' dew.

THURSDAY, 15th. *Above all, taking the shield of faith. Ephesians 6. 16.*

The shield of faith means the shield of Christ's faith. All the armor refers to him.—J. Russell Howden.

FRIDAY, 16th. *My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations. James 1. 2.*

Distinguish between temptation and sin. You cannot help the devil coming down your street, but you need not invite him into your house.—F. B. Meyer.

SATURDAY, 17th. *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things. Matthew 12. 35.*

If men were winning the victory in their hearts, I would not fear the social neglects, the social cruelties, the social injustices, the political sins that well might make our nation ashamed.—John R. Mott.

SUNDAY, 18th. *While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5. 8.*

He died that the enmity of the human heart against God, and the rebellion of the human will against the divine will, and the estrangement and alienation of man to the almighty Lover might pass away. He died that God's holiness might be able to pardon man's sin, and God's love might be expressed and made potent in the sacrifice which expiated man's iniquity. So as the cross of Christ is bathed in the light that shines from the glory of our sacrifice, we are filled with wonder, love and praise, and we stand amazed that the atoning death is not the chiefest theme on all Christian lips.—William Clow.

MONDAY, 19th. *As we have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6. 10.*

Love never misses a chance of doing a good turn to somebody.—J. Russell Howden.

TUESDAY, 20th. *The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation. 2 Peter 3. 15.*

Your Lord and mine is a great believer in the second chance. And not only the second chance, but the third and the fourth and the fifth. By the way, Peter needed them all, too. Ah, there is a touch of pathos in what Peter says in one of his letters, "The longsuffering of our Lord is salvation," for he knew it!—J. D. Jones.

WEDNESDAY, 21st. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. John 1. 51.*

Here is the vision of the open heaven, heaven linked to earth by Christ, who touches heaven with his deity and rests upon the earth with his humanity. If we have before us this vision of the open heaven God will bless our testimony to the salvation of the lost.—A. C. Dixon.

THURSDAY, 22nd. *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. John 13. 23.*

There are many heads lying in Christ's bosom, but there is room for yours among the rest.—Samuel Rutherford.

FRIDAY, 23rd. *Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not. Psalm 17. 5.*

Why should I walk with dread
The pathway I must tread
From day to day?
While at my side shall stand
One with a piercéd hand,
I cannot stray.

SATURDAY, 24th. *So Saul died for his transgression. 1 Chronicles 10. 13.*

God's longsuffering is often misinterpreted as though he allowed men to sin with impunity, whereas the objective of his grace expressed in warning and exhortation is to win the morally wavering to resolute faith and courageous obedience. The tragedy of many a life, however, is that his goodness is misconceived and his purpose misunderstood.

SUNDAY, 25th. *And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. Luke 1. 30.*

Ay, for her infinite and endless honor,
Found the Almighty in the flesh a tomb,
Pouring with power the Holy Ghost upon her,
Nothing disdainful of the virgin's womb.
—F. W. H. Myers.

MONDAY, 26th. *Whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. Romans 14. 8.*

Cultivate the fellowship of God, and you make a lifelong friend, manifesting himself all along the road, at every turn of the way, in all the changes of your fortune, until at last you will find the only fortune worth the name,—a place in your Father's house, and a share in the unveiled glory of the Lord!—J. H. Jowett.

TUESDAY, 27th. *He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Hebrews 4. 10.*

When we cease from our works, God works in us. When we cease from our thoughts, God's thoughts come into us. When we get still from our restless activity, God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and we have but to work it out.—A. B. Simpson.

WEDNESDAY, 28th. *Let not then your good be evil spoken of: for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans 14. 16, 17.*

By linking religion with petty and insignificant self-denials like the giving up of a cigar or a box of chocolates, and by magnifying the importance of paltry acts of penance, there is great danger of degrading the whole idea of piety, and making Christianity seem a superficial and flimsy thing.—Charles E. Jefferson.

THURSDAY, 29th. *He was transfigured before them. Matthew 17. 2.*

We have no means of knowing, but perchance those silent mountain heights and the starlit sky of night had often witnessed such wondrous scenes. The emphasis here is surely upon the words "before them." The outshining of this light, all the radiant glory of the holy mount, was for their sakes.—G. Campbell Morgan.

FRIDAY, 30th. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord. Isaiah 50. 10.*

I do not ask my cross to understand,
My way to see;
Better in darkness just to feel thy hand,
And follow thee!

SATURDAY, 31st. *Even so, come, Lord Jesus! Revelation 22. 20.*

The want of this dying world today is Christ, Christ! The one blessing that wraps in and contains all blessings for us is Jesus! Oh that we might unite in breathing this one grandest, deepest, widest, richest prayer,—inclusive of all prayers,—this valedictory prayer of Holy Writ, "Come, Lord Jesus!"—T. L. Cuyler.

An Appeal.

It was as far back as 1869 that Henry Moorehouse, the young English evangelist, preached in Chicago seven sermons on John 3. 16, sermons that were a revelation to, and awakened a greatly enlarged interest in Bible study in, D. L. Moody. "The Bible became a new book to me," was Mr. Moody's own statement.

Not many remain who were influenced in like manner, if not in like measure. However, there does remain an only daughter of Mr. Moorehouse, a cripple from her babyhood, who has supported herself meagerly by needlework, but is now in real need. One who feels it would be a privilege to contribute to her comfort sends out this appeal for others to join in like aid. The RECORD OF CHRISTIAN WORK will gladly receive, acknowledge and forward such contributions.—Fleming H. Revell.

Some of our readers, writes Dr. Robert Cameron, will remember Harry Moorehouse, known as the "converted thief." D. L. Moody first opened the way for him to come to America, and had him at the Chicago Tabernacle in the '70s, where he preached seven sermons on John 3. 16. Mr. Moody became very fond of him, and he was greatly used of the Lord in many conversions.

He always spoke very tenderly of his daughter "Minnie," continues Dr. Cameron, who still lives in Manchester, England. Recently Dr. Cameron had a letter from her in which she said:

"It is sweet to know that all our weakness is known to our Father in heaven, and that he cares for us. . . . . Last winter I was far from well, and had a lonely time struggling to keep my home together, which grows more intense each year, with rent and coal and light all dearer."

Gifts Received for Miss Moorehouse.
Friend.....$25. Friend.....$10.

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF PAUL.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.

December 4. Paul in Melita and Rome.

Acts 28. Lesson portion, 1-16.

1. In Malta, 1-10.

Paul still occupies the spotlight in the narrative. Neither the centurion nor the ship captain gets a word of mention from Luke. All that is recorded of the three months spent on the island is, first, the incident of Paul and the viper, and, second, Paul's healing ministry, and the reaction of these upon the islanders.

Here are fulfilled the words of our Lord in Mark 16.18: "They shall take up serpents; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." They shall enjoy God's protection, they shall be a medium of blessing to others.

Luke does not speak a word of the discomforts and delay of the castaways during those winter months, nor of any evangelizing throughout the island, though his silence does not mean that nothing was done. Paul's presence was certainly of untold benefit to the islanders, as evidenced by their grateful kindness and generosity up to departure. This section, indeed, furnishes a study in friendliness and hospitality creditable to all parties. Truly the people entertained an angel unawares.

2. Approaching Rome, 11-15.

Paul was not approaching a city where he was unknown. Three years before he had written the great epistle to the large church at Rome, whose faith was spoken of throughout the world. He had prayed for the believers there unceasingly, always, making request that he might be sped on his way to come to them, for he longed to see them, to impart to them some spiritual gift, to establish them, and gain mutual encouragement (Romans 1.8-12). Many of them he greeted by name in the last chapter of that epistle. And now, as soon as word reached Rome that Paul had landed on Italian soil, some set out to meet him, and reached him at the Market of Appius, 43 miles down the pike, while another group met him at Three Taverns, 33 miles from Rome.

Paul always responded to fellowship, and the cordial greeting received from these strangers lifted his spirits in the trying circumstances under which he approached the goal of his dreams and prayers. Never before had he been so welcomed to a city.

3. Rome at last, 16-31!

Again we are struck by Luke's reserve. Not a word does he say of the church in Rome, nor of Paul's trial, nor of the results of such influence and ministries as Paul exercised during the two years of his present sojourn (30).

Among Paul's activities we know that he wrote the "Prison Epistles" so called,—though he was not confined in a prison,—Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians. Read through these epistles, and make a note of all items that throw light on Paul's period of imprisonment.

We learn, for example, that his being chained to a soldier, a different man every few hours, opened new channels for Paul's influence, and so the gospel penetrated the emperor's palace, while many Christian brethren were emboldened to speak the word without being afraid (Philippians 1.12-14). Two most important streams of influence, one personal, the other public.

We learn too that messengers went to and fro between Paul and the churches he had founded, as they sought advice, contributed to his needs, etc.

Luke tells of Paul's effort to reach the Jews of Rome (17-29), and upon their rejection of his message of his preaching and teaching in his hired house (30, 31). This is the last glimpse we have of Paul in Acts, full of confidence and free to fulfil the passion of his life.

December 11. Paul Writes to a Friend.

Philemon.

1. A personal letter.

Primarily this letter was a personal note from Paul to Philemon, as can be seen in every line of it, even though Timothy and others are named in the opening and closing lines. Fortunately Philemon did not throw it in the waste-paper basket, but preserved it,—the only known specimen of Paul's personal correspondence.

It breathes a spirit of mutual love and respect between the two men,—indeed, between all the persons mentioned.

It reveals Paul's personality and character in lesser things, in his concern for a single convert although burdened with the care of churches. It shows that his influence did not rest upon official status merely, but upon the personal affection he practised and generated.

It is a model of courtesy and tact and executive ability in handling a difficult situation between two converts.

Several noble and kindly traits in Philemon are mentioned, such as emboldened Paul to write him with this request to receive back his runaway slave as a Christian brother, no longer as a mere slave (which he still was), but as he would receive Paul himself.

Though so personal, the epistle earns its place in the inspired canon because it contains deep truth and shining example.

2. Some individual results of the gospel.

It is important to remember that the letter revolves within the Christian circle,—indeed, the circle of Paul's own converts. There is no reference to the unsaved, the outsider.

Let our imagination picture the Christian household at Colosse, throwing open its doors for meetings.

Did Onesimus, on some occasion when Paul was a guest in this home, hear Paul preach? Did Paul ever have the chance to urge Onesimus to accept Christ?

Was that a reason why, when Onesimus had run away, he sought out Paul in his hired house at Rome, and was thus led to Christ?

It was awkward for Onesimus to become a Christian, as he would have to right certain wrongs. But following his conversion Paul points out to him his Christian duty, namely, to return to his legal master, confess his sin, and make restitution. Paul will help him with this letter to Philemon, and indeed gives his promissory note (19) to make good on the financial side in Onesimus' stead.

3. Some social results of the gospel.

Growing out of these individual aspects of Christianity we see several illuminating social results.

The background of the epistle is the owner's power over his slave under Roman law. Paul does not challenge this power, he does not intrigue or bluster on behalf of the slave. He honors existing law by counseling Onesimus to return to slavery, to sacrifice personal liberty for the upholding of the law. He takes social conditions as he finds them in this foreign land, and into the relation of this owner and this slave he injects the new fact of Christian brotherhood between the two.

Paul is careful not to dictate to Philemon what he shall do. He pleads various things, based on Philemon's well known Christian character ("Wherefore," 8), but leaves it to Philemon's free will how he will treat Onesimus. Showing the gospel method of reform: from within, of free choice; not by external law or pressure.

What a change follows! A change of atmosphere, even though the Roman law remains the same.

The brotherhood (1, 16, 20) is Christian brotherhood, not the brotherhood of man at large. So with the other relationships. They transcend differences in the social scale.

Though Paul says nothing about slavery in general, verse 16 ends slavery for ever,—and every corresponding social wrong.

From being a fugitive from justice Onesimus is transformed by the gospel into a good and useful man; and this social advance is achieved without violating social justice.

December 18. Paul's Last Words.

2 Timothy 4. 6-18.

Was Paul a success?

What final estimate shall be put upon his life and labors?

Humanly speaking, matters did not go well with him after he became a Christian, either in personal experience or in missionary work. Very much the contrary.

But what did Paul himself think?

We get his estimate in this passage, which contains his last known words. He has been exhorting Timothy as to the correct attitude he should take in facing the responsibilities and dangers at Ephesus, and as the letter draws to a close he becomes personal, and speaks of his own ministry, and his associates, and his end. In a positive but modest way he epitomizes his immediate condition, his long career, his future prospects.

I am now ready to be offered, 6.

He feels his work is done, and once again we have that word "ready" to express his attitude. Ready for his life to be poured out in martyrdom, if that is God's will.

The time of my departure is at hand, 6.

"Departure" carries the figure of a ship loosing its moorings and sailing out to sea. No longer confined in port, but setting out upon its proper function.

I have fought a good fight, 7.

I have striven in a noble strife,—with sin and evil. There is no whining, no lament, as he looks back upon his stormy career. The record was clean.

I have finished my course, 7.

Like an athlete speeding toward the goal.

I have kept the faith, 7.

This explains all else, whether "the faith" means his own attitude of belief or the body of truth he believed. What a testimony this is!

Henceforth, etc., 8.

The fight is finished, a crown is coming, a token of success such as was given to the winner in the Greek games.

What "day"? Not the day of his martyrdom, but of Christ's appearing. Paul's forward glance reached beyond the grave.

At a gathering in New York the chairman introduced Dr. Andrew Bonar with a reference to this crown which should be given him. As Dr. Bonar rose to speak his first words were:

"And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

For the love of Christ's appearing, the habitual love and longing for his appearing, is the mark of a sincere, forward-looking Christian; and this shall gain the reward.

Meanwhile, however, Paul is not living in the air. He misses the companionship of his younger associates, and has some unpleasantnesses to face. He needs that cloak he left at Troas, and the books and papers.

A happy future, 16-18.

Nothing is positively known of Paul's history after the close of Acts. It is generally thought that he was acquitted and released at the end of the two years, that he engaged in further missionary tours, and was arrested again and brought back to Rome.

This time his confinement was not so easy as during the first imprisonment. At his first examination he was alone: his younger companions all being at work elsewhere, and the local Christians either killed or scattered by persecution, or unwilling to face the risk. But as in previous crises that we have seen, the Lord himself stood by Paul, and strengthened him, and delivered him from Satan; and his quiet confidence as to the future, both on earth and in the life beyond, breaks into a doxology.

In the cause of Christ faithfulness is what counts: not necessarily success as the world regards it. Our Lord himself was a failure from this standpoint.

The only life that bears looking back upon without regret and remorse is the life of Christian devotion and endeavor.

December 25. The Visit of the Wise-men.

Matthew 2. 1-12.

Scene 1. The city of Jerusalem, 1, 2.

Enters a caravan of strangers from the East.

Who are they? Wise-men; not the degenerate crooks we have met in Acts 8. 9; 13. 6; etc., but members of a high official caste of learned men who devoted themselves to the study of astrology and other occult sciences. The most advanced scientists of their day. Their gifts were products of Arabia.

Why do they come? They have seen a certain star in their eastern sky, and have linked its unusual appearance with the birth of a king of the Jews: it is "his star." Evidently then they were not Jews themselves, yet in accordance with the prevailing spirit of their profession they came to render homage.

The prophecies of Daniel were known throughout the East, so that the wise-men might figure out from Daniel 9. 24, 25 WHEN Messiah should appear. Weeks, if not months, had now elapsed since the birth of Jesus; for if Mary at the time of her purification, 40 days after childbirth, already had the gold the wise-men brought she would not have offered the sacrifice of poverty. Whether news of the birth had reached the wise-men in their home

From "The Lure of the Leopard Skin" (p. 981).

and led them to make this journey, or not, we do not know. They are aware of the king's birth, but they do not know WHERE to find him. Hence their eager question.

Scene 2. Herod's palace, 3-8.

News of their arrival and of their quest reaches Herod's palace, and causes anxiety. Being more of a politician than a Bible student, Herod summons the chief priests and scribes, identifying in his own mind this "king of the Jews" with "the Christ," Messiah, of whom the Bible was so full. Had he not heard of or heeded the supernatural happenings at Bethlehem that first Christmas eve?

The religious leaders assemble. Being thoroughly orthodox, and not yet having been taught to cut the supernatural out of the Bible, they give the correct Biblical answer at once as to the PLACE of Messiah's birth. Apparently they had never been interested enough to travel the six miles out to Bethlehem to verify the rumors of Messiah's birth.

Herod next arranges a private session with the wise-men, trying to ascertain the exact TIME of Jesus' birth. This information will be useful to him in his murderous plans to cut off the new-born pretender. It was certainly within two years (16).

Scene 3. Bethlehem, 9-11.

Two points of significance mark this scene.

(1) These were the first recorded Gen-

tiles to seek the Saviour of the world. "The East came to his cradle, the West to his cross (John 12. 20)," says Dr. Meyer.

(2) At a time when our colleges are accused of being hotbeds of rationalism and materialism and indifference it is well to meditate upon the significance of this picture of the wise-men studying, seeing the sign, seeking, finding and worshiping the infant Saviour. Some men professing to be wise prove themselves to be fools by their talk and conduct. As Lord Bacon long ago said, "A little philosophy inclineth men's minds to atheism, but depth of philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." The wise-men were devout; their minds ascended by the pathway of their nature study up to God. The greatest men, the greatest thinkers, have in all ages been men of great simplicity, subdued by the sense of their own limitations in the face of the mysteries of nature and life and the unseen.

Christmas Day is the most Christianized day of the whole year. Wherever Christ is known the day reminds us of him, and our hearts warm with his spirit of goodwill. If we have found him as our Saviour and Lord, why can we not carry his life and spirit forward into all the coming days?

Lessons for 1922.

Continuing the eight-year cycle of studies that began in 1918, the International Sunday School Lessons for 1922 shift into the Old Testament. From January to September the subject will be "Later Leaders and Prophets of Israel and Judah: From the Division of the Kingdom to the Close of the Old Testament." The Bible material begins at 1 Kings 12, and lessons are selected from the later historical books up to Esther, and from the later prophets.

Beginning in October the lessons return to the New Testament, and six months are spent in Luke.

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS

ON THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

Thy Will Be Done—With My Plans.

Matthew 6. 7-15. December 4.

One of England's famous scientific men, an agnostic, who had acquired great wealth and had reached the summit of his ambition, stood one morning in his garden, watching a snail climb a plant. As the snail reached the top of the highest leaf and struck out its feelers in all directions, and found no higher pathway, it slowly turned and climbed downward.

"I am like that snail," moaned the old man, "I am like that snail."

Such is the fate of all those who leave God out of their plans. In the end they must retrace their steps—downward!

* * * * *

But what will you say to the man who has failed in his attempt to follow what he believed to be God's plan for him and failed?

Say to him what Napoleon said to one of his marshals who rode up to him and said:

"General, I fear the battle is lost."

Napoleon coolly looked at his watch and replied:

"Time for another battle. Summon the army to another charge!"

Ah, what an army the Christian has! Think of it,—God and his infinite resources!

* * * * *

An old Dutch artist painted the ninth plague of Egypt,—the darkness that fell on the land, just before the death of the firstborn. In the foreground covered with darkness one could dimly see the shadows of men, stumbling along, running against each other, groping to find their doors, coming up against monuments and falling over steps. Some had lamps, but seemed mere specks in darkness. In the background under a flood of light were the homes of the children of Israel in the land of Goshen. Joyous, happy life abounded: children playing in the sunshine, flocks and herds peacefully feeding, flowers opening and fruit ripening.

A tourist gazing at the picture said:

"That is a vivid contrast between lives lived in accordance with man's plans and God's."

* * * * *

From somewhere comes the story of a little girl who was taking great pains to make the stitches in a piece of needlework to look "just like mother's." After sewing silently a long time she suddenly looked up and said:

"The best thing about not putting in crooked stitches is that you don't have to pick 'em out again."

Ah, the bitter pain and sorrow that some of us have felt as we have tried to take out of our lives the taint of some book or picture, the blot of some amusement, yes, the evil of some friendship that couldn't or wouldn't have come into our lives had we meant what we said in "Thy will be done"!

Points in the Pledge We Are Likely to Neglect.

Luke 9. 57-62. December 11.

The ornithologist tells us that in the

bird's foot is an arrangement of muscles that contracts automatically when the bird rests its weight upon the foot, enabling the bird to keep a firm hold upon a branch even while asleep.

Prayer is the Christian's safety device for pledge-keeping. Does it keep you, O Christian, holding firm upon the vows you have taken?

* * * * *

J. F. Cowan says: "I would measure and weigh animals by a yardstick and platform scale, but if I want to know how much of a man there is in a given suit of clothes I would apply the test of promise-keeping; and sometimes the more trivial the promise, apparently, the grander does the man tower up in his unfaltering sense of duty to his pledge of honor."

* * * * *

"Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ."

A story is told of a steam-packet that was crossing a stormy bay when the engine suddenly stopped, and for a few minutes the situation was one of real peril. An old lady rushed up to the captain, and asked anxiously:

"Is there any danger?"

"Madam," was the uncompromising reply, "we must trust in God."

"Oh, sir," wailed the inquirer, "has it come to that?"

Smile if you will, but have you not met people who will trust in everything and everybody but the Lord Jesus Christ?

* * * * *

A village wag, so the story goes, took the sign from a woodworker's shop, "All Kinds of Twisting and Turning Done Here," and hung it on a church where the pastor was accustomed, as Mrs. Partington would say, to dispense with the gospel.

Now the question arises, Wouldn't such a sign apply to some who have taken the C. E. pledge and are accustomed to bend and twist it to make it suit their own convenience and pleasure?

Conscience: Teaching It, Quickening It, Obeying It.

Proverbs 20. 27; Acts 4. 13-20. December 18.

Who among Christians does not believe that "a good conscience is the best looking-glass of heaven," that it is "the soft whisper of God in me," that it is really "a spark of heavenly fire," and yet at times has not set all this knowledge aside, said good-by to conscience, and suffered the pangs of remorse?

"Good-by," I said to my conscience,
"Good-by for aye and aye!"
And I put her hands off harshly,
And I turned my face away;
And conscience, smitten sorely,
Returned not from that day.

But a time came when my spirit
Grew weary of its pace,
And I cried, "Come back, my conscience;
I long to see thy face!"
But conscience cried, "I cannot;
Remorse sits in my place."

—Paul Laurence Dunbar.

* * * * *

An Indian asked to define conscience said:

"It is a little three-cornered thing in here. When I do wrong it turns around and hurts very much. If I keep on doing wrong it will turn until it wears the edges all off, and then it will not hurt any more."

It is astonishing, says one, how soon the whole conscience begins to unravel if a single stitch drops. One single sin indulged in makes a hole you could put your head through.

* * * * *

The following is told by Dr. F. B. Meyer.

"'Is it right to sell margarine for butter?' said an excited youth, as he burst into my vestry one day.

"'No,' said I, 'of course not. There is no harm in selling margarine as such, but it is wrong to pass it off on an innocent customer as butter.'

"'But my employer says I must, or he'll sack me.'

"'Well,' said I, 'as a Christian you have no option; you must keep a clear conscience.'"

The youth went back, refused to sin against his conscience, and was dismissed. He was out of work a week, during which a firm heard of the lad, sent for him, and offered him a much better position, with double his former salary.

Such visible reward of obedience does not always come so quickly, but there will remain a "conscientious inheritance throughout eternity."

Following the Star: What Do Men Find?

Matthew 2. 1-12. December 25.

A pilot boat sailed up the Liverpool harbor during a fierce storm. Her signal at the masthead was, "Follow Me," and following her were eight or nine vessels of all sorts and sizes. As it was too rough to board the ships in the Channel this plan was adopted. Every vessel got safely in. All the helmsman had to do was to keep his eye on the pilot boat, and steer straight in the course she indicated.

Follow the Pilot, and find safety!

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Following the star we find life.

A converted Mohammedan was called before the authorities for reading Christian books, but before judgment was passed he begged to be allowed to ask a question.

"I am traveling," he said; "I look around

for some direction, and discover two men, one dead, the other alive. Which of the two am I to ask for advice, the dead or the living?"

"Oh, the living, of course," all cried out.

"Well," he added, "why require me to go to Mahomet, who is dead, instead of to Christ, who is alive?"

"Go about your business," were the words with which he was dismissed.

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Following the star we find joy.

A converted Hindu was persecuted bitterly for accepting Christ. His relatives, particularly, seemed filled with deadly hate against him for forsaking the religion of his ancestors, and did what they could to force him to deny Christ. Some sympathetic friends asked him how it was possible for him to bear so much trouble, but he replied:

"Ask me rather how it is possible for me to bear all the joy that I have in the service and fellowship of Christ."

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Following the star we leave a trail of immortal glory in our pathway.

When someone asked a Cornish miner how it happened that all his people were temperate he replied:

"There came a man among us once, and his name was John Wesley."

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS.

LEAVES FROM AN INTERPRETER'S NOTEBOOK.

Rev. John Gardner, D. D.

DECEMBER, 1921.

Thursday, 1st. Revelation 15. 1-4.

Milligan says of chapters 15 and 16, "This is not chronology; it is apocalyptic vision, which again and again turns round the kaleidoscope of the future and delights to behold under different aspects the same great principles of the Almighty's government, leading always to the same glorious results." We begin a new section of the book, but we deal with the same problem and meet the same principles and forces. We have seen the problem of the past finding its solution in the Lamb that was slain. We have discovered the universality and persistency of the conflict between good and evil, with the certainty that goodness is omnipotent and evil capable of a mortal wound. Now we are invited to see God at work. He is not merely waiting for wickedness to attack him: he is actually at work attacking wickedness and destroying it. The beast-power, with its accompanying thought-power, or philosophy, has been discovered and exposed; now what is to appear? The plagues of God are to be poured upon them, that is, God is actively opposed to that which is the enemy of goodness, and those who incarnate an evil spirit.

We have seen the sea of human life, the sea which was the dwelling place of hideous monsters of lust and hate and wickedness. Now we see the saints of God, who have faced and fought these monsters, standing on the sea, which is calm though fire-flushed. They have "come off conquerors out of the struggle, and they escape victorious from the temptation to worship his image and wear the badge of his service." They do not stand by the sea on the shore; they stand on the sea, its masters. Their harps belong to the service of God. Their song is of praise of God, not of triumph over their enemies. Their note is fidelity, not vindictive wrath.

Carpenter says, "The Apocalypse is full of Christ. The Lamb is the axis on which the world of its scenery moves. He is the key of earth's history. The victory of the saints is in him. Their song of triumph is of him who put a new song in their mouth, and in whom all things are reconciled."

God is the God of the ages. This song is made up of words drawn from various parts of Israel's testimony to the righteous and truth-loving Jehovah. God is ruler of all world periods, and all that belongs to them. Charles translates "King of the nations," and says it is peculiarly appropriate, since it is God's dealings with the nations alike in the way of condemnation and of mercy that is the theme of this song and of the chapters that follow. He is at work in holiness and righteousness, and in the times to come nations are to be converted during the millennial reign. All nations shall come; one day there will be an absolutely universal recognition of the reign of God. This is spoken of as a divine certainty. Do we believe in it as certain?

Our God, whose is the kingdom, the power and the glory, we adore thee! Thou art the source of goodness, the vindicator of righteousness. Help us to believe in the majesty, the inevitable triumph of goodness! Grant unto us fidelity to thee and to thy cause! In the end of the days may we sing the song of thy triumphant saints! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Friday, 2nd. Revelation 15. 5-8.

In our study of the world drama here unfolded we must keep in mind the vision of the conquering hosts of God standing upon the sea that is blood-red, but smooth and quiet as burnished brass. Now we are invited to look on the heavenly sanctuary, out of which there appear angels who are sent on God's mission.

John would have us see God in action. There are times when we can approach him in intercession for those who perish, but wickedness cannot be allowed to persist. Hence, when the hour strikes, God acts in sovereign majesty as judge and executive.

The punishment and extinction of sin are the supreme faith of good men. We live in a universe where is but one Lord, one law, one principle of life. To it angels and cherubim minister. To it earth must conform. This world was made as the abode of goodness, not of evil; and evil is to be eliminated. I must repeat that what John is here delineating is not those facts in life that have to do with rousing men to think, to repent, to yield themselves, but those sterner facts, that after all evil is not only a challenge to good men, it is a challenge to God. The Almighty is set against it and is determined to exterminate it.

Vaughan says, "The wrath of God is, in other words, the will of God that sin should suffer. He wills it, not though but because he is the God of truth, of righteousness, and of mercy; because sin is not less man's enemy than it is his enemy; and because where sin reigns peace and happiness cannot enter."

In viewing the awful picture of the wrath of God, remember what he is doing. He is making the world fit and safe to dwell in. He is paving the way for all the nations to walk in righteousness, purity, and joy. What a world it will be when sin and hate, sorrow and tears and death have all been eliminated! Do you wonder that men cry, "Amen, come, Lord Jesus"?

Heavenly Father, we pray for the coming of thy day, the day when wars cease, when wrong is conquered, when men dwell in happy content, in knowledge, liberty, beauty and gladness; the day when language is charged with music, when Christ sees of the travail of his soul and is satisfied! Amen.

Saturday, 3rd. Revelation 16. 1-9.

We are now challenged by the voice of the Almighty emanating from the temple of his glory. He has released the angels of judgment and sent them on their awful errand. Milligan says, "No attempt to determine the special meaning of the objects thus visited by the wrath of God,—the land, the sea, the rivers and fountains of waters, and the sun,—has yet been, or is ever perhaps likely to be, successful; and the general effect alone appears to be important." I do not know that any word of mine will help to modify this judgment, but I must venture the interpretation that seems to me to give unity and intelligibility to the book.

The first vial is poured forth on those bearing the mark of the beast. The beast is a symbol of world-power organized on materialistic lines. It may be Egypt or Babylon, Persia or Rome, or any other power. Anyhow, whatever its organized expression, its devotees are to be distressed and perturbed. God will make it hard for those who espoused the cause of organized materialism.

The second vial attacks the lair of the beast itself: it rose up out of the sea. Who knows what monsters are lurking in the same hideous depths? The sea is the hiding place of animalism, therefore wickedness must be hunted to its den. "The sea, out of which the wild beast rose, from which the world-power drew strength, is turned to blood, the blood as of a dead man, corrupt and loathsome. The sea represented the tumultuous impulses and passions of the masses; there is a certain healthy force in these, but under certain conditions, when devoted to selfishness and earthliness, they become corrupt and deadly." The Almighty is the enemy of every emissary of wickedness. He also tracks wickedness down and destroys it in its haunts.

The third vial is poured out upon the tributaries of life, the rivers and streams that flow through the earth and empty themselves in the sea. The rivers and streams give the waters of which men drink and by which they live. I have found no commentary so suggestive as Carpenter, who says, "The streams and rivers feed the sea. They are the powers and influences which go to the making up of the great popular sentiments. These are smitten with the same corruption. Men cannot worship worldliness or earthliness without degrading even those who contribute to their instruction, their recreations, and their joys to the same level. When the public taste grows corrupt the literature will, for example, become so in a more or less degree. The streams of life grow putrid, the fresh and bright gifts of God are polluted, when the ocean of public thought is unwholesome." It is against this sort of thing that the saints and martyrs have to witness, and because of their witness they suffer. The angel of the rivers, that gracious spirit which rejoices and encourages literature and music and all elevating things, grieves at the corruption of them and acquiesces in God's wrath against them.

The fourth vial is poured out upon that which was created to bless but actually scorches and withers. The sun is the center of those influences by which the world is decked with beauty, imbued with fragrance, made fruitful and healthy. The sun sym-

bolizes intellectual power and activity. When these stimulate knowledge, morality, brotherliness, how wonderful they are! When they become arrogant, the allies of wickedness, how deadly their blast! "There is a knowledge which withers while it illumines; there is a teaching which does not warm the heart, but dries both heart and conscience, and brings but pain." On such a condition God's wrath descends. Yet, strange as it is, though men see the judgment of God on wickedness in all its phases, they do not turn from it. Hence they are destroyed along with that which they worship.

It is a terrible thing to ally oneself with those theories, principles, practices, and agencies that are frankly the enemies of what is spiritual and Christlike. It is to court disaster, for God is at work bringing his kingdom into being. None can hinder him from establishing it in the earth.

We pray, O God, that we may be made into temples of thy praise! Grant that thy desires may be realized in us! Help us to serve thee with singleness of purpose! Establish in the earth the community of those who love thy precepts! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Sunday, 4th. Revelation 16. 10-21.

Of the fifth bowl Bossuet says, "By the throne of the beast, Rome, the seat of Cæsarism, is evidently intended; this plague, therefore, strikes the seat of the enemy of God itself." Very respectfully I dissent from all such particular references as being intended by the author of this book. I do not think we shall ever understand its message until we see that John is dealing with wickedness itself, which he regards as organized, dominating, having its tentacles everywhere. He was not assailing the Roman Empire as such, but any and every institution that was built on evil. God is attacking wickedness root and branch. He reaches its very throne, blinding its vision, making it to devour in anguish the instrument of its blasphemies, making its existence intolerable and an object of loathing.

Yet the beast is incapable of repentance. Confused, angry, blind, incapable of rational expression, it still stands defiant of the good. Think of its expression in the late war: the doctrine of hate, the burning of cities, the raping of women, the invention of poison gas, the hurling of explosive shells on hospitals and schools! Yet it has not repented, it is incapable of repentance. It wrought its own anguish and shame, but it never repented.

The sixth bowl reaches the Euphrates. We must remember that when we read names like Babylon, Jerusalem, Euphrates, in this book, we are not to take them literally: they are symbolic. Babylon represents one type of life, Jerusalem another. Babylon is controlled by the spirit of Belial, Jerusalem by the Spirit of God. Babylon and Jerusalem are natural and inevitable foes; the Euphrates is neutral territory between them. This neutrality in connection with the conflict between God and the beast must be attacked and ended. This is a battle to the finish, hence the neutral zone with its marshes and bogs must be obliterated. Hitherto men have always wondered about the neutral. Each side has tried to capture him. As Carpenter says, "Men may be hostile to spiritual religion, yet they scarcely like to shock public sentiment, or to incur the charge of depraving the public morals; but there may come a time, after false principles have been taught, corrupt manners tolerated, and the light of better things darkened, when public sentiment loses all sense of shame, and the decorums of life which have acted as a breakwater against the tide of outrageous evil are swept away; then is the Euphrates dried, and then may the hostile powers of evil, unrestrained by any considerations, unchecked by the popular conscience, cross boldly over and invade the whole sacred soil of human life."

That is it; God means to put an end to the conflict, to decide it once for all. So he sweeps aside all sophistries and makes Armageddon inevitable.

Do not locate Armageddon in Asia Minor any more than you locate Babylon, Jerusalem, and the Euphrates. It is the battlefield between Christ and Belial, God and the beast.

When will the battle be waged? John interjects, in the name of the Lord, a warning that the day will come suddenly, when not looked for, as a thief in the night, and that the Christian must be watchful and ready. A Christian is always on the alert for the final encounter. Armageddon is the mount of decision, the place where organized wickedness is dethroned.

So the seventh bowl strikes the air. The prince of the power of the air must come crashing to the ground. The voice of the Lord cries again, as on Calvary, "It is finished!" At last suffering and pain, wickedness and crime, poverty and injustice, are at an end. A mighty earthquake shakes the institutions of the beast, and they totter and fall. Babylon, symbolizing the seat of world-power, loses its cohesiveness. Its chieftains cannot organize their forces and agree on a common policy. The grand alliance is at an end.

Would you see its fulfilment in the destruction of Rome? That is but an illustration. God is the supreme factor in the problems of the universe. "Right is right, since God is God; and right the day must win!"

Hailstones as heavy as talents is clearly a metaphor. A talent varied in weight from 60 to 120 pounds. The idea is of the raining down on wickedness of that destruction from which there is no escape.

The force, the resistlessness of the onslaught will make wickedness and all its emissaries furiously angry, but from it there is and can be no escape. Even at the last the spirit of the beast is without repentance. Wickedness is incapable of change. To get rid of it God almighty must capture it and fasten it down in hell.

Our Father and our God, we thank thee that thou workest in the world on behalf of thy saints! We praise thee for thy great power, and for thy will to rid us of that which curses our lives. We pray for the speedy coming of thy day of triumph. In Christ's name. Amen.

Monday, 5th. Revelation 17. 1-6.

It is the habit of modern scholars to identify this harlot with Rome and its Cæsar-worship. John is said to attack both, and to rejoice at the anticipation of their overthrow. I have consistently repudiated this line of interpretation. It is unnatural in a Christian, it is beneath the dignity of this Book, which is really the most marvelous drama in the world.

Babylon is the mystical metropolis of the empire of wickedness. This woman, gorgeously attired, drunk with the lust of power, ensconced upon the wild beast, is a harlot. Have we met anything like her outside of this book? Zechariah had a vision of a woman in an ephah who had come from Babylon, and who was only restrained from taking up her abode in the city of God by angels of judgment who carried her back whence she had come. That vision was called wickedness; the symbolism was that of commerce when it is degraded. John now depicts something like that. Proud Babylon, seat of the empire of evil, carries a woman, bewitching, seductive, symbol of the lust for wealth and the things that wealth can buy. Similar ideas abound in Isaiah and Jeremiah. It may be that Rome was the embodiment of the Babylonish spirit in John's day. So are Paris, London and New York today.

We see then wealth, pleasure, voluptuousness, being borne aloft by the metropolis of world-power, and the rulers of the earth debasing themselves and their peoples because of the lust for gold. She is in the midst of a wilderness; that is, the reverse side of ostentatious, soul-destroying luxury is squalid wretchedness. The problems of great cities are sufficient explanation of John's figure.

"The wild beast is scarlet in color, the dragon was red, the woman is clothed in scarlet. Is it the emblem of lawlessness ending in violence? It has also a show of sovereignty." The late war was undoubtedly a war for the markets of the world. Kings and empires lust for new wealth. There are Americans who would fight Mexico for the sake of oil and silver. The golden cup is full of that which makes men drunk and degrades them.

> If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
> Wild tongues that have not thee in awe,
> Such boasting as the Gentiles use,
> Or lesser breeds without the law:
> Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
> Lest we forget, lest we forget!

The word "mystery" means, do not take the word literally. Babylon is a symbol, a type. It was a luxurious court that indorsed Nero's infamous crime. It was similar courts that sought to exterminate the Huguenots and the Puritans.

John wondered at the vision, for it is strange that commerce, which might be the mother of culture, civilization, art, literature, philanthropy, can become the ally of things that are impure and degraded.

We worship thee, O Christ, great friend to all the sons of men! Help us to hear and heed thy rebuke of sin, to rejoice in thy power to break the fetters of iniquity, and to lead us into the liberty of the sons of God! May this liberty be ours! Amen.

Tuesday, 6th. Revelation 17. 7-18.

As we have said, most modern commentators agree in referring this passage to Rome, and believe that the beast is Nero, whom many people had expected to reappear as a monster of ruthless cruelty and wickedness. I do not believe the theory. Christianity never has been mixed up in dreams of ghosts, and Nero had already become a vague dread even to the most superstitious. To accept the theory you have to think that the woman represents Rome, to ignore the reference to her sitting upon the waters. The interpretation is to my mind trivial, and fails to appreciate the figures which John employs. Fancy a similar interpretation of Shakespeare! His man-monsters are never likened to individuals, but represent certain great and terrible forces.

Remember what we learned in studying chapter 13. The beast is organized wickedness. He has had a mortal wound. Like the dragon he has been killed, yet withdrawing into the abyss he has been resuscitated, and again emerges, if not to strike and slay, to seduce and then assassinate. Wickedness rides on the sea, it rests on mountains, it expresses itself in various forms. Mountains suddenly become transformed into kingdoms and empires. Verse 10 shews that John is thinking of something bigger than Rome, of something that existed before Rome and shall exist after Rome. At the same time Rome may be a phase of his vision; but John is dealing with a world-problem, with the fight between good and evil. History proves that John was not thinking of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. If he were his prophecy would now be discredited. I believe this to be one of the divinely inspired books in the Bible, and that its message is demonstrated to be absolutely true. The beast

and his sevenfold expression shall alike be destroyed by the all-conquering Christ. The battle is not over, but Christ is winning all the time.

Just as the heads or hills are kingdoms of wickedness, so the horns are projections of wickedness, forces, theories, phases of evil as it seeks to dominate society. All these arise out of the sea, which in verse 15 is explained as humanity. In and among ourselves does wickedness come to organized and articulate expression, and on the plane of human life must the battle be fought. When man turns from his leaders to Christ he will rejoice in the beginning of that new era in which goodness, happiness and peace shall universally prevail.

Dear Lord, we thank thee that we know thee to be on our side, fighting our battle with us and for us, giving us the victory again and again! Hasten the day of the final encounter, we beseech thee! Amen.

Wednesday, 7th. Revelation 18. 1-3.

Are we to give these words the conventional interpretation which makes them a prophecy of the fall of Rome? Case takes this view and says, "The prospect of Rome's overthrow is a subject upon which the seer loves to linger. The reasons for her destruction are threefold. In the first place, she has been guilty of causing all the world to participate in the fornication of her idolatrous worship of the emperor. Not only the populace, but also the subject princes of the Roman world have been induced to accept the imperial cult, thus making it unsafe for a nonconforming Christian to reside in any part of the empire. Lastly, the luxurious customs of the city have called into being a vast commercial activity in which men grow wealthy and thus have their minds turned away from other-worldly matters of which the early Christians were advocates."

The latter remark shews that even Case can see that the seer is sensitive to something more than a base passion for vengeance. No, we are reading words that breathe the whole spirit of the Saviour. John is not hungry for the ruin of Rome; he is revealing the menace of an unbridled love of Mammon. He shews God at work against the love of the world, against the lust of the eyes and of the flesh, and the pride of life.

The world seems to us to be a fairy land until the light of day shines forth. When one of God's holy seraphim appears the apparently substantial and glorious is seen to be tawdry, just as the tinsel at a circus is ugliness when the sunlight strikes it.

Mammon has made nations drunk and confused in vision, Mammon has driven proud kings into exile, Mammon has turned the wisdom of merchants into folly, and led men of large fortune to gamble away their patrimony and to live in garrets. This wonderful saint, who had written before, "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world," now holds up the world in all its tawdriness and lets heaven's light fall upon it. It is doomed. It fights against God, and must perish.

Teach us, O Lord, the way of thy statutes! Help us to love thee supremely! Wean us from the world! May we love mercy, do justly, and walk humbly with thee! Amen.

Thursday, 8th. Revelation 18. 4-8.

We have taken our choice of interpretation as between the popular one, that John is attacking Rome in what is admitted to be a most unchristian manner, and the condemnation of the city of the world as enshrining a love of luxury. Believing that this latter is John's purpose and rather than anything local, we have now a challenge to Christians to come out from among the ungodly.

The words are an echo of Jeremiah, and also remind us of Matthew 24. 16. Alford says, "The fear in the case of God's servants remaining in her would be twofold: (1) lest by over-persuasion or guilty conformity they should become accomplices in any of her crimes; (2) lest by being in and of her they should, though the former may not have been the case, share in her punishment."

What voice is it that calls? Does the angel turn to entreaty and warning? Or is it the voice of God himself?

There is evident danger in living beneath the glamor and imbibing the spirit of the world. Mammon has more than once tried to strike a bargain with religion, it has imagined itself adequate to purchasing heaven. God does not forget her. He is long-suffering, but now he is at work, and means to rid his world of wickedness. He would have his servants come out from among the ungodly, and touch not the unclean thing. He means to visit luxury with a heavy retribution.

Eternal God, we thank thee that thou art our refuge, and that thou dost uphold us with thy tender care! We turn to thee in trouble, and are eased of our load; we come to thee in our distress, and thou dost comfort us. Grant that we may be cheered by hope this day, and that we may trust thy knowledge and thy power! Amen.

Friday, 9th. Revelation 18. 9-20.

Scott thinks that the apostle must have had a real city in view, and that any spiritual interpretation we may give is secondary, not primary. And yet he admits that this is rather a description of Tyre than of Rome, and also that we must give the author poetic license for his description. Of course we must. The seer's description is of a city of wealth given over to luxury. It is any city; John's object being to shew one of the most serious aspects of the con-

flict between goodness and wickedness, Christ and Belial, God and the beast. When open hostility challenges our loyalty, the witchery of gain may seduce us from our attachment to Christ.

Commerce, when it over-reaches itself, becomes involved in confusion and disaster, just as war or any other spirit of evil. We see it today. The world was plunged into war in 1914 because of markets: today commerce is utterly confused, the value of money is uncertain, men know not what policy to pursue. Merchants are doing as the text says, weeping over ruined markets. "The grief described is the result of fear mingled with selfishness. The mourners remember, with a regret only tempered with terror, the voluptuous life, the quick-growing profits, and the varied commercial advantages which they have lost in her overthrow."

John had not lived in a great commercial city for nothing. Notice his arrangement of the treasures whose loss is lamented: (1) precious metals and jewels, (2) rich clothes, (3) precious woods and ivories, works of art, things beautifully carved, (4) aromatic articles, (5) choice foods, (6) cattle, horses, chariots and slaves, (7) choice fruits. These are the things a luxurious society loves and merchants grow rich in providing.

Notice the phrase "souls of men" (13). What a description of the exploitation of human beings! "Souls": are they the slaves who are used to gratify base and sensual passions? Carpenter says, "The climax of wicked worldliness is reached in this last; it gives the finishing touch to the picture of society wholly engrossed in pleasure, indolence and selfishness, which lays every market under tribute to add to its luxuriousness, and sacrifices not only the happiness but the lives and liberties of its fellow-creatures to its own enjoyment."

> Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

Alas, alas, when commerce is degraded! She may be the handmaiden of religion, she may become the mother of culture and civilization, and the helper of all good. But when men give her the place that belongs to God, and seek her before they seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then alas and alas! The servants of Christ, many of whom were sacrificed because they resisted her, shall see their loyalty vindicated. One day it shall be known that virtue is better than riches, that a city is built on goodness, not on wealth.

Our Master, we pray that we may be permitted to sit at thy feet and to learn of thee! We want to live according to thy rule, we would do the things that are according to thy will. If we are slow to learn, do thou forgive us, and deal with us patiently until we learn the habits of goodness. Amen.

Saturday, 10th. Revelation 18. 21-24.

That which is described is not the political state. John is not attacking the city of Rome, nor the Roman Empire, any more than he is attacking any other city or empire. If his words had any immediate significance it was to the people to whom he wrote. His burden is that which the prophets carried, which our Saviour uttered, which rests on every epistle in the New Testament. That which is described is internal, it is the pleasure-loving city, the busy toiling city, the city of homes, the city of brides and bridegrooms, the city of luxury and wealth. We all know such a city, it is real and actual today in every land. You and I live in it.

From such a city the saints, apostles, prophets have withdrawn. From it Bunyan's Pilgrim fled, although he still lived beneath the same roof and walked the same streets as before. We have contrasted songs: the song of the 20th verse and the song of the 22nd verse. When the music of the city of the world is silenced, the music of the saints persists.

Carpenter says: "The taking up of the stone and casting it into the waters is a symbol drawn from Jeremiah 51. 63, 64. The great dead mass, sinking helplessly by the law of its own weight, signified a fall past recovery. So Pharaoh and his host sank like lead in the mighty waters. It is the doom Christ foreshadowed as awaiting those who caused his children to fall. The mighty angel, strong to lift the ponderous stone, throws it into the air, saying, Thus with a bound shall Babylon, the great city, be thrown, and shall not be found any more. At one bound, without a single resting stage in its downward career, without chance or power of recovery, the vast world city would fall."

What are the three charges (23, 24)? (1) She has produced magnates who wantonly exalt themselves; (2) she has seduced all the nations by her sorcery, drawing the meshes of worldliness and sin about them; (3) she has martyred saints. This was true of Jerusalem as well as of Rome. It is still true. The love of money leads men to persecute and slay those who criticize or oppose. The good man is pilloried. Notice how theatres and picture shows sneer at and belittle men of God.

Our Father, teach us the possibilities of our lives! May we learn that there are things we must be and do, that what we ought to be we may be through thy enabling power. Help us to give ourselves in daily service! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Sunday, 11th. Revelation 19. 1-10.

We have been witnessing the work of our great ally. He is working mysteriously, but he has discovered the lair of the beast, and he is pouring out his bowls of wrath on every place where he hides or works.

Not only so, but he is doing what we have neither the courage nor the wisdom to do: he is fighting against the scarlet woman, the seductive influences of wealth and luxury. Now we are ready to hear the heavenly Te Deum. Those who in former times followed God, those who in every age have been awake to his working, those who control and direct the forces of nature, those cherubim and seraphim who stand before the throne, unite in crying, Alleluia!

The language of the song is an echo of the psalms which John loved. In the last chapter he felt the need for singing; now the anthem peals through the arches of heaven. Salvation belongeth to God. He can and does rescue his universe. He is almighty in his vindication of righteousness and truth. The four and twenty elders who represent the church of God, the four living creatures who represent nature worship, worship God as king. There never was a time when he ceased to reign. He is omnipotent today and for ever.

And now we have a picture of the consummation of redemption, the marriage of the Lamb. Jesus had referred to it, Paul made it the basis of his doctrine of conjugal love. The bride has prepared herself for the marriage, she is arrayed in fine linen, bright and pure, the emblem of righteousness as manifested in the inner life, a figure expressive of character. "The harlot attracts by ostentatious colors, the tokens of qualities more conspicuous than abiding, more dazzling than helpful; the Lamb's wife is robed in pure and stainless white, the token of those high moral, spiritual qualities by which she has been known. The source of these righteousnesses is divine: it is given to her to be so arrayed. It is no fictitious righteousness. It is real, it is hers, though it would never have been hers but for him without whom she can do nothing: and it is through the wearing of this white flower of a blameless life that she has borne witness for her Lord, and against the spirit of harlotry and sin."

It is evident that the bride and the guests are one and the same. The bride is the church in her collective life, the guests are the component parts. The words symbolize the close relation between Christ and the church. When wickedness is defeated the travail of the Lamb will be ended, as also the travail of the church, and in that hour the Lamb and his bride, Christ and all faithful souls, shall be invited to sit down at the banqueting table of life. The church of Christ will rest, and feast, and reign with her Lord; and in all the peace, gladness, and triumph of that joy-time God's servants will share.

We would not have thy church silent, O Lord, when all the earth and all heaven are praising thee! Thou hast revealed unto us the wonders of grace as well as of providence, therefore we will praise thee with heart and voice, and love thee with all our strength. Amen.

Monday, 12th. Revelation 19. 11-16.

Who is this rider on a white horse? Is he the first of the four horsemen of chapter 6? Carpenter says, "That early vision of a conquering Christ had been first a hope and then a despair as age after age interposed its obstacles to the manifestations of the sons of God; but now with added splendor the vision is renewed, the hopes of the waiting shall not perish for ever." But we did not take such a view of the first horseman. We looked on that figure as the first effort of man to solve life's riddle, the belief that it needs a super-man, an Alexander or Cæsar, to lead men to happiness. And we saw war breeding war.

It is evident that we have reached the climax of the vision. Everything which we have read has anticipated the vision now opening. We are to see wickedness destroyed beyond hope of recovery, and the community of God's people established.

The rider on the white horse is Christ. He is faithful and true: his fidelity can be counted on, and his ability equals his trustworthiness. He administers righteousness, and he is bold and fearless as the Lion of Judah. He has come forth not to destroy everyone, but the nations that are hostile to him. The description reminds us of Isaiah 11. 3.

Christ wears many diadems. The dragon wore seven crowns, the beast ten, but Christ wears many diadems. The crowns were symbolic of victories won by brute forces, the diadems symbolic of inherent royalty and authority. Before the beasts can keep their crowns they must settle accounts with him. "He is truly king: king of history, king of life, king of human hearts, king everywhere, over each realm and over all realms, king of kings, Lord of lords" (Carpenter).

What are we to understand by the secret name? We know him as Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, only begotten, the Good Shepherd, the light of the world, our friend, our redeemer, Son of man, Son of God. Yet there is more to learn,—whether the ultimate secret will ever be revealed we know not. There is always something between us and God which others cannot penetrate. Every true soul has its shrine. Christ knows his own secret. There is wonderful power hidden in the name.

There is not a single note in this book which is not victorious. The book is positive of the absolute triumph of goodness. The victory of Christ is won by the sharp two-edged sword of spoken truth. His word is the judge of men; nothing could resist its power in Galilee, nothing shall resist it in the final conflict.

Dear Lord, we praise thee for thy power to save, for the certainty of thy victory

over all wickedness and all sorrow! We thank thee for the assurance of faith and hope whereby we pray, Thy kingdom come! Let it come in our generation, we beseech thee! Amen.

Tuesday, 13th. Revelation 19. 17-21.

What is the meaning of "standing in the sun"? Alford says, "Not only as the place of brightness and glory becoming the herald of so great a victory, but also as the central station in mid heaven for those to whom the call was to be made." Carpenter says, "The central spot to summon the birds, and the spot where he stands bathed in the sunlight, the symbol of the divine presence."

Babylon has gone, yet the spirit of evil remains. We miss the point if we think that John had in mind simply or chiefly Rome and her emperor-worship, or speaks as a foreteller of the papacy. If Rome in any way envisaged the spirit of Antichrist (and she did), then he spoke about the overthrow of Rome. But his message was bigger and deeper than that, as I have tried to show. As Vaughan says, "Wherever the spirit of Babylon is, there the prophecy of its overthrow starts again with vigor."

The vision is terrible. A strange instinct possesses birds of prey, and they gather from every quarter in anticipation of the slaughter. All classes are mentioned. "Those who follow the world-power, and array themselves in hostility to the true king, belong not to one class, but may be found among all. The war is not between class and class, but between righteousness and unrighteousness, truth and falsehood, Christ and Belial. We must remember that the vision is a great figurative representation of the defeat of the antichristian powers and principles in the world; this will save us from misapprehending its purpose, and from a bondaged literalism."

It is not necessary to describe the battle. John gives the issue. The beast is taken alive, as also his prophet. The beast is organized wickedness in its coarse and brutal forms, the prophet is the agent of the beast in its more specious and philosophic form.

As to the lake of fire Carpenter says, "The lake of fire is mentioned here for the first time; we hear of it frequently afterwards. The flames and brimstone, smoke and other volcanic forces indicating the existence of subterranean fire, might well lead the ancients to place their Tartarus and Gehenna in the under-world."

The kings and their armies were not at once cast into the lake of fire as were the beast and the false prophet. Charles says, "Their physical life was destroyed by the sword, i.e., by the sword of the word of God, and their spirit no doubt consigned to Hades. In the judgment all the dead are raised, and then death and Hades and all the wicked are cast into the lake of fire." Yes, the word of Christ is a spiritual weapon of resistless might, and before it human pride and pomp and strength are exposed as weak and worthless. The only sure and eternal thing is the power of Christ. It is stronger than the grave, stronger than sin.

Our Master and our Lord, we thank thee that thy day of redemption draweth nigh! Thy great power shall soon transform our earth, and make it the abode of righteousness and peace. Help us to rejoice in the near approach of thy day! Amen.

Wednesday, 14th. Revelation 20. 1-3.

We now come to a most difficult passage. There is nothing like it in the Bible, and it is capable of a variety of interpretations.

We have seen how hard is the battle against the beast and his emissaries, but John is always confident of victory, and has shown us our invincible Christ leading his armies in triumph. But what of the prince of this world? He has been judged, we were told in the gospel, but if he is at large he is dangerous. John saw a strong angel, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain, and he seized the dragon, cruel, fierce, deceptive, malignant, and cast him into the abyss, and sealed the door for a thousand years. Every symbol is charged with meaning.

What are we to understand by the thousand years? Milligan says, "They embody an idea; and that idea, whether applied to the subjugation of Satan or to the triumph of the saints, is the idea of completeness or perfection. Satan is bound for a thousand years; that is, he is completely bound. The saints reign for a thousand years; that is, they are introduced into a state of perfect and glorious victory."

When the world is rid of the devil, the beast and the false prophet, when the throne of Christ is established, and his martyred hosts awake in the earth, and men are subject only to his influence, will they all become good? Will they all surrender to their Saviour? No! As Charles says, "The astonishing part in our seer's forecast is that the preaching of the gospel during the millennium will only in part be successful, though the active impersonations of evil have been wholly removed from the earth for this period. The implication is that each man carries in his own bosom the possibilities of his own heaven and his own hell."

This is a startling thought. We have imagined that if we could get rid of the devil, if we could only give people the right environment, right laws, right institutions, right influences, they would all become good and turn to the way of Christ. No, says God's servant. You may have an ideal condition extend for a vast period of time, but he that is unjust and filthy will remain so. Men are not so ready to accept Christ and follow goodness as you

might imagine. They will welcome the devil whenever he reappears.

Our Father, we have need of thy mercy; visit us with thy salvation, we beseech thee! Wean us from sin, from self! Help us to love our Saviour, and to desire those things which are right in thy sight! Amen.

Thursday, 15th. Revelation 20. 4-6.

We have seen that John is giving us in dramatic form a philosophy of history and religion. His method is vision and reflection, and there is a unity and steady development of thought throughout this book. In Charles' words, "while the ordinary man saw only the outside of things in all their incoherence and isolation, the apocalyptist sought to get behind the surface and penetrate to the essence of events, the spiritual motives and purposes that underlay and gave them significance." Thus we come to the conclusion of the great world struggle between good and evil. All enemies of goodness are destroyed or in the abyss, and the door is shut upon them. There is to be no place for sin or crying or pain or death any more.

Who are those who sit upon thrones along with Christ during the millennium? Charles thinks the intention of John is that authority is now vested in the hands of the righteous, and not in those of the oppressors of the church as aforetime. Beckwith thinks the martyrs rule. "The co-sovereignty of the risen martyrs with Christ through the thousand years is the one dominant thought of the passage. Judging is inseparably joined with ruling. The martyrs occupy thrones, and the power of judging and ruling the nations is given to them." If Beckwith were right we could not explain the following words. I agree with Charles rather than Beckwith, though the point is difficult.

In the millennium the Lamb that was slain, the martyred saints who followed him and drank his cup, and those who were faithful, attain triumph and sovereignty. As Carpenter says, "These things are stated as constituting their privileges. They lived, whereas the rest of the dead lived not; they reigned, and judgment was given to them, that is, the chief power of governing. They reign, they judge, they live: the true and full powers of life are seen to be theirs. And is not this the case always? Who, next to him who knows the secrets of our hearts, exercises judicial powers over men? Do not those whose lives, as we read them, rebuke our own? Truly, those who lived for God and refused the mark of earthliness reign and judge us in our worldliness and weakness. This is their sovereign honor here, besides their glad reign in the unseen world!"

What is the first resurrection? Many have tried to take the reference as to a spiritual rising with Christ to be followed later by a physical rising, but that meaning is not in these words. This resurrection is limited to the martyrs, but it is as real as the second, in which all the faithful share.

John gives not a hint that the millennium would soon appear. The overthrow of the beast and his prophet is by the word of God, that is, by spiritual weapons; the conquest won by Christ is a spiritual conquest. The nations still exist during the millennium. Christ's authority and the preaching of the gospel by his servants is a spiritual victory, judgment and rule. But the whole passage is difficult and obscure. The promise to martyrs must not be claimed by those who have not shed their blood. John's vision was of the "souls" of the martyrs. The passage does not say that Christ comes in his second advent. It follows a description of the Christ and his warriors facing and defeating the beast and false prophet and their allies. It is really the climax of the conflict depicted throughout the book. We must be careful lest we read into the narrative what is not there, and so miss the truth and also divide and confuse the church.

We thank thee, O Shepherd of our souls, that thy strength and knowledge are our defence, and that in thee we are saved from fear! We pray for grace to follow thee whithersoever thou leadest. Amen.

Friday, 16th. Revelation 20. 7-10.

In chapter 19. 11 to 20. 10 we have a portion of Scripture which has given rise to endless controversy. It is admittedly difficult of interpretation, but controversialists have added to the difficulty by their inferences and theories. Note that (1) nothing is said by John in this passage about Christ reigning on earth. The words in 5. 10 do not refer to the millennium. Christ sits at the right hand of God, and we may assume that the souls of the martyrs reign with him there. There is no hint in this passage of their bodily resurrection and return to the earth. (2) There are scholars who believe that it was John's idea that only the martyrs are living with Christ in glory at the present time. It is possible that the faithful are also there. The fact that they live and reign with Christ a thousand years does not imply that they only began to live at the beginning of the thousand years, or that they cease to live at the end.

What are we to understand by the binding and loosing of Satan? His binding means that he was restrained from action, hindered from using the nations and their rulers, but afterwards had the opportunity to organize and inspire those who were set on evil ways notwithstanding the dominance of Christ and those associated with him. If men are taught the truth, if they live under the reign of Christ a thousand

years, if they are surrounded by gracious moral influences, if all the malign powers of Satan are curbed for centuries, and yet they cling to their wicked and materialistic ways, it is evident that only fire from heaven can make an end of sin. Mankind has let slip the splendid opportunity of a really golden age.

What are Gog and Magog? Originally Gog was a prince, and Magog his kingdom. Here apparently they stand for the ruling spirits among the nations who refuse the Christ way and resist his influence. They respond to the influence of Satan, and organize their forces to resist and overthrow the power of Christ. Nothing but God's omnipotence can eradicate evil from the world.

What is the lake of fire? Do not forget that material images are employed to illustrate spiritual facts. This is the key to every figure, every symbol, in the book. These figures have terrible significance. The lake of fire is not Gehenna, yet it takes the place of Gehenna. It is outside the bounds of heaven and earth. It is beyond the range of our conception, the place of torment where wickedness is consigned.

Almighty God, thou alone canst rid our world of evil and misery! It is not in our power to save ourselves. When we would do good evil is present with us. Come to our aid, O Lord, and give us victory! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Saturday, 17th. Revelation 20. 11-15.

The great white throne is lit up with the splendor of the divine glory. The whiteness symbolizes purity and integrity. Where is it situated? The former heaven and earth have passed into nothingness, it is the only thing left. It is occupied by God alone. When the living were judged the judgment was committed to Christ; now that the dead are judged, or rather, the risen souls clothed with spiritual bodies, the judge is God. No one escapes. Those who can buy immunity here have no means of evasion there.

What are the books of God? Alford says: "These books and the book of life bore independent witness to the fact of men being or not being among the saved, the one by inference from the works recorded, the other by inscription or non-inscription of the name in the list. So the books could be as vouchers for the book of life."

Verses 14 and 15 I do not understand. Death and Hades seem to be personified. The lake of fire is not the second death, but those who are cast into it experience the second death. Who these may be is stated in 21. 8. Carpenter says, "It is clearly figurative language implying that Death, the last enemy, is destroyed, together with Hades, personified as Death's escort. The second death is a death of which the first death, the physical death, now destroyed, was but a faint figure. It is a condition which needs no coarse exaggeration, no vulgar literalization of the prophetic imagery, to heighten the horror of it. Very awful is that spiritual death which knows not and loves not God, and from which Christ has come to arouse us. More awful must be that second death in which the spirit, no longer the sinning victim of hereditary evil, has become the victim of habitual choice of wrong, loving darkness rather than light, choosing alienation rather than reconciliation. Of the full meaning of the words in their true and future force we can have little conception. It is enough for us to remember two things: they are figurative, but they are figurative of something."

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt regard us as we humbly bow before thee! Thou hast conquered us by love; we surrender to thee! Grant that we may not walk life's way apart from thee, but that always we may feel thee near us! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Sunday, 18th. Revelation 21. 1-5.

We now emerge into the light of the new morning. What a wonderful change! All evil has been destroyed for ever; there is a new beginning. Whether an entirely new earth and heaven as suggested by verse 1, or a transformed earth and heaven as suggested in verse 5, is immaterial; John focuses attention on the result, and simply yet sublimely tells us its contents.

A new center for the world's life appears, the New Jerusalem. The city is never to know tears or sorrow or pain or curse. Its glory and blessedness are found in the presence of God and the Lamb. God's servants will be his own possession, and a new name shall be emblazoned on their brows.

This is the climax to the drama of redemption, the solution of the eternal mystery, the purpose of all our travail. This is why Christ died.

Notice that the New Jerusalem comes after the millennium and the judgment. It is the center of the fresh start which God makes with none but pure and tested souls.

In that new world there is to be no sea; no violent, treacherous, remorseless, devouring sea; "the sea, that waste expanse, that divider and severer of nations, that instrument of a material and oftentimes an unrighteous and a cruel traffic, is not any longer."

The tabernacle of God is his shekinah glory, and that means that he is the all-pervasive presence everywhere. Where two are present, as husband and wife, or two students seeking to learn the laws of the new life, God is with them, their God.

Carpenter says: "The splendid array of negatives come as heralds of the positive

peace of the New Jerusalem: no sea, no tears, no death, no mourning, no crying, no pain. With the former things these six shadows pass away from life."

O God, we pray for the coming of the glad day when we shall dwell in a different world from this! Grant that the uncertainty of that day may fire our zeal and inspire our prayers! May we see the wonders of thy kingdom, and work for its speedy coming! In Christ's name. Amen.

Monday, 19th. Revelation 21. 6-8.

The word is antithetic. "Behold, I make all things new" is followed immediately by the words, "They have become (new)." That is, when God affirms a thing it is as good as done.

"I am Alpha and Omega." That is, I who affirm originate, and I who originate will bring to a consummation. He who begins will perfect the work. It is not left to us to live by hope. Here and now are springs of the water of life. From them we may drink with perfect freedom. It is a gift of God, free to all who desire it. He who earnestly desires communion with God may enjoy it. "The thirst for God will be satisfied in the relation of perfect sonship with God."

Again we have the challenge to be not craven-hearted, but courageous and victorious. John knows the need for courage. The beatific vision is for him who will climb the mountain steep and bare, in order to consecrate himself to a life of sacrifice.

Who are disfranchised? Their loss is their own action; they disfranchised themselves in order to become citizens of the kingdom of darkness. The first are the craven-hearted. They have been cowardly, and bent their knees to a false god in order to keep a sound skin. Next are the untrustworthy. This failure leads one man to deny the faith and another to reject it. Third, the defiled and impure, people of loose character. Then we have a whole class of abominable things. "The insincerities of heathenism, the frauds of its priests as well as all the falsities of Christians, are here referred to. Lying and duplicity are denounced in the Old Testament, but in far stronger terms in the New."

"These who are thus shut out from the heavenly city stand in contrast to those who are admitted; yet among those admitted are such as have sinned through fear, faithlessness and fleshliness. Sin indeed excludes from the city, but it is sin loved, sin unrepented of, which alone can close the gates of the city whose gates lie open day and night."

Our Father, we would walk bravely along the way that leads to the New Jerusalem, singing and making melody in our hearts unto thee! We thank thee that our steps lead homeward, that the light of the city is dawning. Help us to go forward with courage and humble obedience! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Tuesday, 20th. Revelation 21. 9-14.

The kingdom of God which is to be established when the new earth appears must have a capital. This kingdom shall be the center of gracious enterprises, and from its capital shall emanate wise and blessed laws. There is something more in life than we are in the habit of seeing. Our sweetest songs are those that tell of human woe, but another aspect is to be witnessed, radiant and blessed. One of those who have been tracking the beast to his lair has now the office of showing the diviner side of things to the astonished seer.

In studying this portion of the book Carpenter feels it wise to again warn us that we are dealing with figurative language. "Half the errors of the church have been due to prosaic-minded men who could not discern between figure and fact; and men of unpoetical and vehement temperament have blundered over these descriptions, and their blunders have discredited the whole Apocalypse in the eyes of some."

"The glimpse of God's coming glories is best gained from the consecrated heights of self-surrender and prayer. On a mountain apart, the mountain of supplication and separation from the world, are the light and glory of God best seen. There are Beulah heights and transfiguration heights from which we may gain glimpses of that city and of the glory of the Lord of that city."

We see, then, a community illumined with the glory of God. It is not exclusive: its gates are open to every quarter. Those who dwell there and exert high office are those who qualified for office by their character and service here.

I ought perhaps to point out that some modern scholars think the words are out of place, that they ought to come before the description of the millennium, and refer not to the Jerusalem of the new-made earth and heaven but to the Jerusalem the capital of the millennial reign of Christ. I feel, however, that the words are best read as they appear. There are difficulties, but John is describing what he believes to be a fact,—the purpose of God to make all things new, and to let them centralize around a wondrous city of holiness, truth, righteousness and love. In verses 1-8 John is more concerned with the life of the community; now he gives a description of the splendor and glory of the city.

O God, we thank thee that we have been loved with an everlasting love, and led by heavenly grace, and taught by the Spirit of truth! We thank thee for the peace and joy which come to believing hearts. Help us to know that we are thine, and that thou hast given thyself for us! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Wednesday, 21st. Revelation 21. 15-21.

What is the idea of measuring the city? Ezekiel 40. 3 has a similar idea. Both Ezekiel and John are thinking of an ideal city. Had they referred to any actual, existing city their meaning would have been either that it was being built or rebuilt, or that it was to be destroyed, or to be protected from peril. Here the measuring is to emphasize its fair proportions. It is the city of which holy men have dreamed, the city which God saw when he first determined to make a universe, and toward which he has been working all through the ages.

What of the material of which the city was built? Jasper is probably meant for diamond. He who sat on the throne in John's opening vision in chapter 4 had a radiancy like unto jasper, and the radiant glory of God in verse 11 is like jasper. Milligan says, "It is evident that the city is thought of as ideally perfect, and not according to the realities or possibilities of things."

Its gates are connected with the twelve tribes, and the precious stones with the twelve apostles. The faith out of which his vision springs is historic, it is that which is inshrined in our Bibles, it centers in Christ, it springs from Abraham. There are different types in the foundations of the city, but the same spirit animates each and all.

O God, who didst lead our fathers through the wilderness, and hast been our guide in all life's way, we give thanks unto thee! May we and our children know thee as our guide, our guardian and defence! Guide us until at last we reach the city of peace! Amen.

Thursday, 22nd. Revelation 21. 22-27.

In the city of God the temple and the ark of the covenant give place to God himself and his Christ. In the time when martyr souls were passing from gibbet and block and flame into the homeland, there was a temple in which they served him day and night, but now the former things have passed away in heaven and in earth, and God becomes the temple, and Christ the center of hope and life. The glory of the eternal presence is so radiant that there is no need of sun or moon. A similar vision had come to the wondering sight of Ezekiel; he had beheld a spiritual temple superseding that of Jerusalem. All agencies of grace which have guided, sustained and blessed God's pilgrim hosts on earth now surrender their office to him of whom they bore witness. Isaiah had declared rejoicingly, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee, but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory" (60. 19). Now the Lamb of God is seen to be the light of the world, and all men live beneath his benign rays.

Wonderful will be the day when all nations walk by the light that emanates from him. All nations will yield to his reconciling influences. No thought of war shall mar their relations. This city of God shall have as its own defence the spirit of brotherly love, of filial joy.

When John says that there shall in no wise enter into the city anything that defileth, are we to suppose that he thinks these things still remain? Some think the words are out of place, but personally I think that he is filled with ecstasy at the thought of the blessedness, and reiterates that there is no room in the new world for impurity, or falsehood, or any other abominable thing such as has tortured us in this world.

Of the open gates Scott says: "Gates open continuously signify perfect tranquillity and safety. Here there is the further thought that even the natural reason for closing them is removed: both danger and darkness are done away."

Our Father in heaven, we pray that as men of old beheld the star that led them to him for whom their souls longed and their intellects craved, so we may be led to him; for he is our hope and our crown of rejoicing. May his spirit possess us at this season of the year! Amen.

Friday, 23rd. Revelation 22. 1-5.

The river of God has been our guide from the first chapter of our human story until now. It has its source beneath the throne of God in the fountains of the water of life. The wondrous river flowed through Eden and enriched the garden in which God and man had tryst. The psalmist rejoiced in the streams of the river that made glad the city of God. Ezekiel saw its course as it flowed from the heights of Zion to purify and transform the sea of death, giving life to all whithersoever it came. Zechariah saw living waters flowing out of the city of God to refresh the spiritual life of the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem. Everything lives where the king is present. It is by the presence of the Spirit of life in the soul that our thirst is assuaged and we have perennial joy.

Apparently the life of the new world will develop out of the same principles as now, that is to say, there will be nations, only they will be so related to the metropolis of love that from it they will derive those influences which shall sustain them in holiness and righteousness. Life is in constant need; there never will come a time when men can dispense with the authority of God.

In the new world there will be no accursed thing, nothing that mixes with the good as an alloy, nothing on which God's displeasure rests. A trinity of blessings rests upon the servants of God: they serve

him, they see him, they resemble him. Their service is a ministry, every act worshipful. Tennyson sang:

> Strong Son of God, immortal love,
> Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
> By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
> Believing where we cannot prove.

All that is over, for we see his face, and trust because we know intimately and directly who and what he is.

Moreover their life is a crowned life. The kingdom of truth is theirs, and it abides for ever.

We thank thee, O God, for the song which heralded the coming of our king! Like those who responded to the song and worshiped at the feet of the Babe of Bethlehem, we too would worship, we too would give ourselves and our works. We long that all nations should walk in his light. Hasten the day, we beseech thee! Amen.

Saturday, 24th. Revelation 22. 6-15.

The vision is ended. In view of the glory that is to be, John expresses his exultation and warnings.

We listen to the word of Christ that what is written in this book is true, that his power is absolute, and his advent certain and speedy. It was the task of Christ declared in the opening verse of the book to unveil the eternal secret; it was the slain Lamb who alone was judged worthy to break the seals and read the mystery. John has been made the instrument through whom Christ might teach even the meaning of life, the far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves. Sometimes John has been stirred by one emotion, sometimes by another; whatever spirit he was in the one eternal Spirit has been controlling and inspiring him. It was Christ who sent the angel who has been John's guide and mentor in all that he has seen and recorded.

Verse 7 gives the last of the beatitudes of the book. A similar benediction is given by John in 1. 3; now it is reiterated by Christ.

Who is the speaker in verse 10? Scott says, "Whether it is the angel or the Saviour it is not easy to decide. If it is the angel, he speaks yet more clearly in the name of Christ. But probably from this point it is the voice of Christ that is heard."

The word is a timely one. The church is in sore straits, so is in need of high encouragement.

As to verse 11 I incline to the suggestion of Carpenter, "Is it not the declaration of the ever terrible truth that men are building up their destiny by the actions and habits of their lives? It is in this law of our nature that the key to many of the darkest problems of the future may lie; and not without a solemn declaration of this law does the book of Revelation close."

Character is the only test of fitness or unfitness for the city of God and the fruit of the tree of life.

Our God, standing on the threshold of Christmas we give thee thanks for the first advent of our Lord and Saviour! We praise thee also for the second advent, which is as certain as thyself. Help us so to live that it may not be delayed! May we this day give ourselves to him whom thou didst give to us and for us! Amen.

Sunday, 25th. Revelation 22. 16-21.

The book closes with an affirmation that the record of John is faithful and authoritative, and to be heeded by those to whom it is sent. There is the declaration that "Christ is at once the root and the stem and the branches that spring from the root, and thus combines all the Messianic claims of the Davidic family. Thus he forms the climax of Jewish Messianic expectation."

What is the voice that calls through all the aisles of time, that speaks through every word of prophet and witness? Is it not the Spirit of God in travail for the coming of him in whom the day of consummation centers? What is the cry through all the ages of his church? In hours of vision and of consecration, in days of persecution and martyrdom, is she not burdened with the thought that one day we shall know the will of God as being done by all in earth and heaven, one day evil will be dead, one day sorrow and sighing will have fled away, one day knowledge shall cover the earth, one day the bridegroom prince shall be crowned? Does she not cry, Come? And can any man read the vision and see what is involved in this book of prophecy and not cry, Come? The book of Revelation is the book of the coming One. Bengel says, "The power of the whole gospel concentrates itself in this, that one should be able to respond to this Come, and repeat it from the heart."

This book is rightly called the climax of the New Testament. It is a book of the heart. As Scott says, "it describes as no other book does the glory of our ascended Lord, and the triumphant issue of his conflict with evil. The pictures which it draws of heaven and those that dwell there, of the new life where there shall be no more death, commend themselves to the Christian heart, not alone for their intrinsic beauty, but because Christ is so plainly set forth as the lord of that life, and his sacrifice as the way by which men attain it."

Let us offer the collect for Christmas Day:

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thine only son Jesus Christ, grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge; who

liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

NOTE.

In order that we may begin the new year with Genesis we will spend the mornings of this week with timely readings in aspects of the life and work of our Lord.—EDITORS.

Monday, 26th. John 1. 1-14.

John's Gospel was written toward the close of the first century to meet new needs. The other three Gospels had given many facts concerning the person, life and work of Lord Jesus, but attacks were now being directed against the new and growing religion by the Gnostics which apparently called for a new statement from the gospel standpoint. This explains the philosophic-looking beginning of John's Gospel as compared with the synoptics, and the use of the expression "the Word" as applied to our Lord.

The prime purpose of the book is to prove the deity of Jesus of Nazareth (20. 30, 31). It starts "In the beginning . . . . with God," and leads up to the incarnation (14); but John breaks into this declaration with personal testimony to the glory of Lord Jesus calculated to maintain the balance and relation between his humanity and deity. Yes, it was true that the Word had become man, and that John himself had been privileged to spend three years with him in every-day human relationships. But that very experience makes him pause. Jesus was man, but he was more than man,—he was unique among men, differing not in degree but in kind, possessing glory as of an only-begotten from a father. He was the son of God in a sense that we can never be.

Can we bring John's testimony and experience up to date? May we see our Lord's glory now?

For answer turn to 2 Corinthians 3. 18: "We all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror (or reflecting as a mirror), the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit." The transformation in a believer's character, it is the glory of the Lord!

Tuesday, 27th. John 12. 20-32.

The object of these Greeks was to worship at the feast of Passover. Though they were Greeks by race they had adopted the religion of the Jews. Not satisfied with the religion that Greece had to offer they had sought heart-satisfaction in Judaism, with its higher revelation of one God, holy, just, long-suffering, merciful.

But they are not fully satisfied yet. They hear of One who for three years has been going up and down the land preaching a still loftier religion, speaking wonderful parables, performing wonderful miracles, in some cases even raising the dead! True to the intellectual genius of their race they want first-hand information of the new teacher, who himself claims to be God, Son of God; so they approach his disciples with a request for a personal interview.

John does not tell us anything more about them. No doubt the interview was granted, though the story of it is not recorded, because there was deep significance in the coming of these men, and John drops them to tell the more important story. Only a few in number, they were to our Lord the harbingers, the promise and pledge of more Gentiles to follow, the fulfilment of many a prophecy following his own death.

Man cannot help worshiping. To his credit it may be said that no sooner does he learn of a higher religion than he reaches out after it. The heart will never be satisfied until it finds peace in the living Lord Jesus.

Wednesday, 28th. John 8. 51-59.

An unpleasant episode, when bitter argument is turned into attempted stoning.

The passage proves the deity of Jesus from another angle and from his own words, namely, his preëxistence.

It unfolds another fact of human experience, the joy and happiness that come of seeing and knowing Jesus.

In Hebrews 11. 13 we read of those who in the old dispensation died in faith, not having received the promises but having seen them and greeted them from afar. Here we learn of one such explicit experience, and we ask when and where did Abraham have it?

Not in Ur of the Chaldees, when he was living in heathen darkness.

Not in Haran, when he had only half way fulfilled the call of the God of glory.

Not in Egypt, nor in Gerar, where he practised the usual craft and stratagems of the time.

Abraham no doubt had many transporting experiences in his dealings with God, but the supreme occasion on which he saw Christ's day was doubtless at Mount Moriah,—his surrender of Isaac, type of our Lord's sacrifice on Calvary.

If Abraham had such a joyful experience, what ought ours to be! The parent fountain of all joy is the joy of salvation. We get it at Calvary as we look back by faith and see him dying in our stead.

Thursday, 29th. Luke 24. 13-27.

The key to this incident lies in the word "all," repeated three times in verses 25 and 27, "all that the prophets have spoken, all the prophets, all the Scriptures."

When we examine the Old Testament, the Bible of Christ's day, we find many references to the Coming One. At first he was foretold as a deliverer; then, as the seed of Abraham, the source of blessing to all mankind; then as Shiloh, to whom the gathering of the people should be; and later

on, as the portrait of Messiah was becoming more and more distinctly drawn, he was foretold as one who should suffer. The greatest Messianic chapter in the book, the 53rd of Isaiah, has the double picture of a suffering and a triumphing Servant of Jehovah. The Jews were quick to see and believe in a glorious Messiah, a conquering Messiah, who should deliver them from the foreign yoke and restore their ancient kingdom and their national glory; but a suffering Messiah, a humiliated Messiah, a slaughtered Messiah, never! They did not believe ALL that the prophets had written.

That was the attitude of these Emmaus disciples. Their Messianic hopes had collapsed. "We hoped," they said, "that it was he who should redeem Israel," but he was dead, three days ago. He is only a "prophet" to them now. The trouble with them was that they believed only half the prophetic record of Messiah's career. They had hoped for unbroken glory; they could not understand the cross and the grave.

The strange thing is that while Jews then and now believe only half the truth, many Christians have followed their example but with different direction: they accept the fact of Messiah's suffering but seem to overlook his glory. They turn back to Calvary, but do not see him on the throne. They dwell upon the past, but do not face forward to the future. "O foolish men, with hearts so slow to believe ALL that the prophets have declared! Had not Messiah to suffer, and so enter his glory?"

Let us joyfully take the great body of unfulfilled prophecies and make them a vital part of our religion, living truth, a real force in our thinking and living!

Friday, 30th. Acts 10. 34.

Up to this point in the story of Cornelius Peter has been feeling his way. He is not sure of his ground in having anything to do with a Gentile. Now his attitude changes, a certain truth becomes plain and living to him, the feeling of restraint disappears, he proceeds to preach Christ to the assembled household. The hinge is in the words "I perceive."

There is a difference between hearing and perceiving, between getting information and understanding it, between holding a truth and being held by it. If we grasped and retained even a fraction of all we have read and heard and been taught since first we began going to school we should be walking encyclopedias. But sometimes a truth does flash upon us with gripping power, with all the force of a new revelation, and so becomes dynamic in our life.

This is what happened to Peter. The truth that God has no favorites so far as racial distinctions go,—though of course God is a respecter of character and conduct,—is writ large in the Old Testament. But though Peter knew the letter, he negatived the truth in actual life, confining his ministry to Jews. Now, however, the time has come in the divine program for the progress of the gospel when the truth must be brought to the front and lived up to. The circumstances of the vision of this chapter flash light upon the truth lying unheeded in Peter's mind.

The process of reflection, meditation, upon the Bible under the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit will bring wonderful results. Seeds of truth, lying dormant, will spring to life when the conditions are favorable. Verses will flame forth with new meaning and power. The Bible will become a new book.

Saturday, 31st. Philippians 3. 8-14.

The great profit of the end of a year in spiritual experience lies in this, that it rounds out a definite period of time when we may well pause and compare our state of heart and conduct with that of a year ago, and see whether we have advanced or retrograded,—and that steadily, or spasmodically, or accidentally and unwittingly. It suggests a spiritual stock-taking such as wise men in business are wont to take at the year's end. "Examine your own selves," is one of Paul's last exhortations to the Corinthians, "whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Is your peace with God unquestioned? Is the peace of God still garrisoning your soul? Is your communion unbroken? Are you strong as ever in the joy of the Lord? Is your love of Christ flowing full and free? Is your foundation upon God's Word unshaken? Are your prospects bright and hopeful?

Paul was not an egotist in a bad sense, but in this passage,—indeed, in the whole chapter from which it is taken,—he talks about himself. He lays bare his heart. He takes account of his standing in the Christian race. There is first the inward look, and then the backward look. He has been recalling his earlier privileges and possessions, things that gave him confidence in his social and religious standing; but he does not want to be misunderstood, he is not carried away by any sense of personal sacrifices made when he became a Christian, and he does not wish these Philippian friends to imagine that because he is an apostle he has realized the ultimate goal of Christian experience. Then the forward look, or rather, using the figure Paul used, the runner's effort with every muscle strained to its utmost endeavor to obtain the prize.

A believer may be humbled by the contrast between what he is and what he knows he ought to be, but realization of shortcoming ought not to discourage, but to stimulate us to nobler endeavor to reach higher levels of holiness.

Beginning next month.

Daily readings in the book of Genesis.